

M83 JAMIE LIDELL ATMOSPHERE SHITKATAPULT MISS KITTIN

XLR8R

116
APRIL
2008

ACCELERATING MUSIC & CULTURE
XLR8R.COM



THE MAYOR
OF THE DIRTY SOUTH
TALKS POLITICS,
PIMP C,
AND GETTING
HIS ICE CUBE ON.

0 71486 01119 4 04



\$4.99 US \$6.99 CANADA XLR8R.COM
PRINTED ON 100% RECYCLED PAPER

IT'S A SCREAM.

THE 2008 xD.



what moves you

Vehicle shown is a special project car, modified with non-Genuine Scion parts and accessories. Modification with these non-Genuine Scion parts or accessories will void the Scion warranty, may negatively impact vehicle performance & safety, and may not be street legal. © 2008 Scion is a marque of Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.

electronics

Ray Barbee
The Lady Tigra
Amy Gunther
Steed Lord



Photo: Vincent Sloglund

wesc
© WeAreTheSuperlativeConspiracy

www.wesc.com



puma.com

SportLifestyle

STREB Extreme Live Action Company wears PUMA





JAMIE LIDELL, PHOTOGRAPHED IN NYC BY PAUL O'VALLE

Issue No 116

DROID BEHAVIOR	16
SHITKATAPULT	18
BIRD PETERSON	20
JEREMY JAY	22
KELPE	26
MISS KITTIN	28
GHOSTLAND OBSERVATORY	30
JUSTUS KÖHNCKE	36
BUN B	40
M83	48
JAMIE LIDELL	54
ATMOSPHERE	60
PAUL HARTNETT	66
STYLE: LOOKING FOR A MODERN THUMP	74
MUSIC REVIEWS	85
MUSIC COLUMNS	96
IN THE STUDIO: BOGDAN RACZYNSKI	110
ARTIST TIPS: EVOL INTENT	112
COMPONENTS	114
VIS-ED: CHRIS DUNCAN	122
TBC: SOUTHERN COMFORTS	128

PUMA.com



SportLifestyle

Usan by PUMA



Ed's Rant: Story Time



An outtake from our style shoot, styled by The Goods! and photographed by Josh McNey.

We have been trying to make a Bun B cover happen since September of last year—it's been so long, and so fraught with hope and anxiety, that I was about to get a forearm tattoo of the dude's name (since it had already appeared there in my dream). You can chalk this up to the number of people on Bun's team—the more publicists, handlers, cousins, label managers, and friends an artist has, the more difficult it is to actually get through to them—but it's also got to do with the man himself.

While Bun is the king of the Dirty South, he prefers to live his life much further under the radar than T.I. or Andre 3000—you're more likely to find him playing to 2,500 grateful fans in a Louisiana backwater than flossing his ice in some flashy Midtown club with bottle service. Yeah Bun shines—did you check out that piece he's rocking on the cover?—it's just that he prefers to really rep for his people rather than some industry execs. When we finally got Bun on the phone he was as gracious as could be, speaking to our resident hip-hop lover Jesse Serwer about politics in the hood and the recent passing of his UGK partner Pimp C.

Meanwhile, another story was cooking overseas as we transported Patrick Sisson from his temporary home in Prague to live out his playboy-on-a-budget fantasies on the French Riviera. Um... just kidding. He actually jetted to Antibes to get up close and personal with Anthony Gonzalez, the man behind M83's swelling, emotional shoegaze soundtracks. Tooling around in Gonzalez's grandfather's convertible, Pat talked to Gonzalez

about why he's in no hurry to leave his adolescent home—or his adolescence—behind.

That's not the end of this issue's special treats. Stacey Dugan got a personalized tour of Minneapolis from Slug, the Bruce Springsteen of the indie rap game, who proved to be every inch the American anti-hero—he's slowly been working towards. Speaking of anti-heroes, our Best of 2005 cover star Jamie Lidell returns under the new guise of *Jim*, ditching glitch altogether for a stab at making himself into a new breed of R&B star. Joe Colly met up with him during tour rehearsal in New York City, and got the scoop on his recording process, his new live show, and how he is going to avoid becoming the next John Legend. (We don't think he'll have to worry about that one.)

You'll also notice some newsprint going on in this installment of *XLR8R*. This month we busted ass to create a special 'zine devoted to the dance music of Baltimore, from Blaqstarr's naughty B-more club jams to the leftfield bounce of Maxmillion Dunbar to The Death Set's riot-at-the-prom synth-punk. The friendly natives helped us charm our way into clubs like Paradox and Choices to bring you the real deal (and if you're feeling fleet of foot, try out Rye Rye's instructions on how to do the Spongebob).

I'm going to go before I give away any more secrets, but big love to all those who contributed phone calls, flight times, double espressos, and vegan biscuits to making this issue happen. Spring forward!

- Vivian Host, Editor

Staff

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Brianna Pope (brianna.pope@xlr8r.com)

EDITOR

Vivian Host (vivian.host@xlr8r.com)

MANAGING EDITOR

Ken Taylor (ken.taylor@xlr8r.com)

SENIOR DESIGNER

Tim Saputo (tim.saputo@xlr8r.com)

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Audrey Kell (audrey.kell@xlr8r.com)

ONLINE MANAGING EDITOR

Jennifer Marston (jennifer.marston@xlr8r.com)

RICH-MEDIA EDITOR

Bryant Rutledge (bryant.rutledge@xlr8r.com)

PRODUCER, XLR8R TV

Kerry McLaughlin (kerry.mclaughlin@xlr8r.com)

SENIOR WRITER

Toph One (redwine@xlr8r.com)

VIDEOGAMES EDITOR

Ryan Rayhill (ryan.rayhill@xlr8r.com)

COPY EDITOR

Frances Reade

EDITORIAL INTERNS

Ali Gillow, Taryn Harrington, Zoneil Maharaj

STAFF WRITERS

Eric K. Arnold, Sarah Bentley, Derek Beres, Nick Chacona, Roy Dank, Martin DeLeon, Matt Earp, Rob Geary, David Hemingway, Max Herman, Ross Hogg, Ethan Holben, Ross Holland, Justin Hopper, Josiah Hughes, Brandon Ivers, David Katz, Jason Leder, Luciana Lopez, Monty Luke, Cameron Macdonald, Fred Miketa, Peter Nicholson, Tomas Palermo, Dave Segal, Jesse Serwer, Evan Shamoan, Philip Sherburne, Patrick Sisson, Scott Thill, Josh Tonnissen, Janet Tzou, Tony Ware, Rico Washington

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Tyra Bangs, Michael Byrne, Eric Coleman, Joe Colly, Allura Dannon, Stacey Dugan, Derek Grey, Andy Hermann, Connie Hwong, David Katz, Sam Mickens, Doug Morton, Bruno Natal, Andrew Parks, Mosi Reeves, Chris Sabbath, Eric Smillie, Velanche Stewart, Roger Thomasson, Will Tobin

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS

Morgan Howland, Paul O'Valle, Dustin Ross, Christopher Woodcock

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Anouck Bertin, Sandy Carson, Eric Coleman, Andy Eisberg, Kate Fruchey, Baba Israel, Josh McNey, Rocio Rodriguez Salceda, Jack Thompson, Francesca Tamse, May Truong

STAFF ILLUSTRATORS

Chuck Anderson for No Pattern, Derek Morris for Trophy

CONTRIBUTING ILLUSTRATORS AND STYLISTS

Liz Baca, Mike Davis, Chris Duncan

ON THE COVER

Bun B photographed in Houston by Jack Thompson.

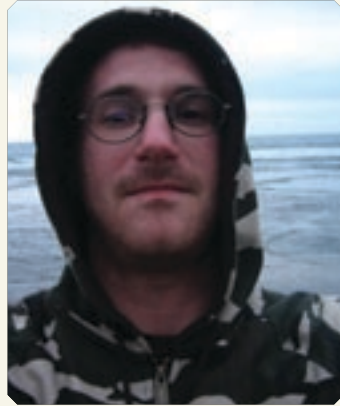
IN AN ABSOLUT WORLD MACHINES AMPLIFY YOUR CREATIVITY

ABSOLUT® VODKA. PRODUCT OF SWEDEN. 40% ALC/VOL (80 PROOF). DISTILLED FROM GRAIN. ABSOLUT, ABSOLUT BOTTLE DESIGN, AND ALL OTHER ABSOLUT TRADEMARKS ARE OWNED BY V&S VIN AND SPRIT AB. ©2007 V&S VIN AND SPRIT AB. IMPORTED BY ABSOLUT SPIRITS CO., NEW YORK, NY. PHOTO: LAURENT SEROUSSI. ENJOY WITH ABSOLUT RESPONSIBILITY.®

INTERACT WITH THE ABSOLUT CHOIR MACHINE AT ABSOLUTMACHINES.COM



Contributors



Mike Davis

Mike Davis is a graphic designer, DJ, pinball enthusiast, and pancake demolisher based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. As a member of Burlesque of North America, a crew of designers and screen-printers, he's also responsible for the famed annual Dre Day parties. Davis was handpicked to illustrate his home town of Minneapolis for this issue's Atmosphere feature. Please mail him all of your raer [*sic*] records.

twelvecarpileup.com,
burlesquedesign.com



Connie Hwong

Contrary to what her photo may suggest, Connie Hwong is not a gun nut. She just doesn't like being photographed, and this was the only photo she could find that did not feature her sleeping or looking totally idiotic. When she isn't writing about music for various online and paper pubs, she can be found writing grants for the Bay Area Video Coalition, riding her bicycle, or shredding the streets of San Francisco on her moped. This month Connie profiled Austin dance-punks Ghostland Observatory.



Stacey Dugan

Writer Stacey Dugan resides in the currently freezing climes of Chicago. Though she should be focused on completing her masters degree at the University of Chicago, she instead spends most of her time obsessing over nail art, hip-hop, cats, and politics. For this issue, Stacey made the trek to Minneapolis to interview and write about Atmosphere. You can read her work in publications such as *URB*, *The Fader*, *Vibe*, and *XLR8R*, among others.



Tim Saputo

Since joining *XLR8R's* staff last June, senior designer Tim Saputo has never been happier. He moved to the Bay Area seven years ago for art school, but had to resort to taking soul-sucking corporate-design jobs to support his five-cup-a-day Peet's addiction. Since then, Tim has designed album art for Strategy, DJ / rupture, and other Tigerbeat6 projects. Among his main interests are downloading early '90s house tracks and trawling blogs for the words "Kylie" and "Aoki." Catch him on *XLR8R's* show on Scion Radio and West Add Radio's Secret Springs program.

Staff

PUBLISHER/EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Andrew Smith (andrew.smith@xlr8r.com)

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

Roy Dank (roy.dank@xlr8r.com)

ADVERTISING MANAGER

Ethan Holben (ethan.holben@xlr8r.com)

EVENTS

Fred Miketa (fred.miketa@xlr8r.com)

ADVERTISING AND MARKETING INTERN

Megan Carson

ACCOUNTING MANAGER

Jamie Kochan (jamie.kochan@xlr8r.com)

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Jennifer Marston (jennifer.marston@xlr8r.com)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Fred Miketa (subscribe@xlr8r.com)

OPERATIONS CONSULTANT

 Michael Prommer

CO-PUBLISHER

 Arias Hung

ADVERTISING: Dial 415.861.7583, fax 415.861.7584, email advertising@xlr8r.com, or mail *XLR8R* Magazine, 1388 Haight St. #105, San Francisco, CA 94117.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Domestic: \$20 (one year, 10 issues) and \$40 (two years, 20 issues); Canada: \$40 (one year) and \$80 (two year); all other international: \$50 (one year) and \$100 (two years). Subscribe by credit card online or send payment to XLR8R Subscriptions, 1388 Haight St. #105, San Francisco, CA 94117. Payment made out to "XLR8R Magazine," US funds only. International orders must be paid by credit card or international money order. Questions? Email subscribe@xlr8r.com or subscribe online at www.xlr8r.com.

CIRCULATION: Newsstand distribution through Curtis Circulation. For direct retail sales, Jennifer Marston at 415.861.7583 x226 or jennifer.marston@xlr8r.com.

CONTACT US: San Francisco HQ: 1388 Haight St. #105, San Francisco, CA 94117; New York Office: 350 Seventh Ave. #1504, New York, NY 10001; letterbox@xlr8r.com, fax 415.861.7584

BIG THANKS TO... Huge props to Leslie at Mute, Dana at Biz 3, Tracey Nguyen at 5WPR, Irene Soyfer, Lucy Barber, patient saint Liz Baca, Colin Strandberg, Shawn Caesar and Scottie B at Unruly Records, Dave Nada, Garo at Rooftop, Andy Eisberg Cullen Nawalkowsky, Red Emma's, Jessica Linker, Jesse Tittsworth, Brian Metcalf at Max Borges Agency, Brent and Elizabeth at SXS.W.



XLR8R is printed on 100% recycled fiber EcoMatte Plus and Reincarnation Matte papers, which are manufactured with electricity offset renewable energy certificates.

XLR8R Magazine is published ten times a year by Amalgam Media, Inc. All writing, photographs, and artwork printed within the pages of *XLR8R* Magazine are copyright and property of Amalgam Media, Inc. and may only be reprinted with permission from the "I'll have the Starfleet Salad" publisher. Please mail letters, charts, complaints, submissions, general information and review material to *XLR8R* Magazine, 1388 Haight St. #105, San Francisco, CA 94117, or fax us at 415.861.7584 or e-mail us at letterbox@xlr8r.com. *XLR8R* is a trademark of Amalgam Media, Inc.

XLR8R™ **amate™** **amalgam**

ISSN # 1526-4246 CSA # 1741454

©2008 MOUNTAIN DEW, DEW, DO THE DEW and DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT are trademarks of PepsiCo, Inc.



DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT.™ DO THE DEW.®

Letters to the Editor

Got something to say? Love us? Hate us? Write us at letterbox@xlr8r.com or send mail to XLR8R Magazine, 1388 Haight Street #105, San Francisco, CA 94117.



January/February Issue #114



March Issue #115

Tape Head

Hey guys,
Just wanted to thank you for introducing me to the Suck UK Mix Tape USB drive [issue #114, "Elements: Brighter Days"]. That thing is freakin' amazing. Keep looking out for cool gadgets!
Sofia M.

Over It

To my dear friends at XLR8R I can't deny—I fell into it at first, too. I listened to The Pack's "Vans" song on repeat for a good three months. But should we really be getting that excited about a hip-hop boy band? Leave it MTV to take these guys on. Their sound is already boring me.
Mike, via the web

Style for Miles

Hey XLR8R

The Jeremy Liebman photos in the recent issue are amazing [issue #114, "Press Eject and Give Me the Tape"]. Love the black and white, love the style, love the bands—love it all. You guys should do this every issue!
P-Boy, via the web

Big Pimpin'

I can't believe Pimp C only got a little paragraph about his death! It didn't do him any justice. That man deserves a whole issue. R.I.P. Pimp C—your legend will never die.
Roger Woodlock

Vivian responds:

Well, we hope this Bun B cover will suffice.

Jump what?

What's up XLR8R?

Always impressed with your stuff, but can you kid-dos elaborate on one thing? The jumpstyle article in issue #114 ["What Is It?"] caught my interest but I need more info! Can you hook it up with top 10

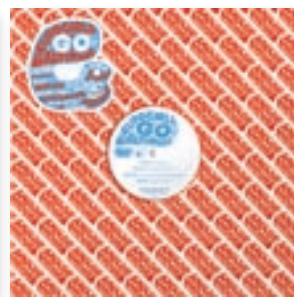
sample tracks on your site? I want to hear more of this Euro-trance phenomenon. *Meghan and Shawna, via the web*

Ken responds: We suggest just YouTube-ing the words "moped dance." All your questions will be answered.

Mountains of Praise

Hey Toph One-

Thanks for including the *Klunkerz* review on the Lucky 13 page [#113; December 2007]. That film was truly inspiring and deserves way more coverage. Mixing mountain bikes with XLR8R music hardly makes sense on paper, but you guys do it right.
Peace,
James R, via the web



XLR8R's "Baltimore House Party" Contest

Grab a pair of floor-rattlin' monitors and some of B-more's hottest beats.

For this month's contest, XLR8R brings you to the heart of the gritty-Baltimore. If you're getting down to Scottie B or DJ Tittsworth, or ripping t-shirts to The Death Set, you already know what Charm City parties are all about. Now we're hooking it up so you can throw your own B-more-themed jammy jam. First, from our friends at KRK come the highly rated KRK VST6 monitors, which provide some serious bass action. You'll also get copies of The Death Set's *Worldwide* (Counter),

a party pack of vinyl and CDs from DJ Tittsworth, Dave Nada, and Scottie B's Unruly label, and a little Baltimore-by-way-of-Paris fun courtesy of Jean Nipon and Orgasmic's *Eurogirls Go to Baltimore* compilation (Arcade Mode), which features classics from Rod Lee, Debonair Samir, and more. Hell, the Arcade Mode folks are even throwing in t-shirts to keep you looking fly. All you have to do to win is tell us, in 100 words or less, which Baltimore artist will make you dance all

night and why? The best answers win the prizes below.

One grand-prize winner will receive: One pair of KRK VXT6 monitors, an Arcade Mode t-shirt, and a copy of each of the CDs and vinyl listed.

Two runners up will each receive: An Arcade Mode t-shirt and a copy of each of the CDs and vinyl listed.

Entries will be accepted via standard mail and email. Entries must be received by April 29, 2008. Send your entry, with t-shirt size, to XLR8R's "Baltimore House Party Contest," 1388 Haight St. #105, San Francisco, CA 94117 or email contest@xlr8r.com with "XLR8R's Baltimore House Party Contest" in the subject line.



krksys.com arcademode.com counterrecords.com tittsworth.com unrulyonline.com davenada.com



MADE OF JAPAN
Onitsuka
Tiger

onitsukattiger.com

Wish You Weren't Here

BJ "Bitter" Bastard takes month off, turns column over to bitter *XLR8R* staffers.

BJ "Bitter" Bastard is taking the month off. BJ has had enough of this shit. Time to go to Bermuda. Time to open a topless taco stand in Cancun. While BB is on vacation in Fiji trying to find out if Fiji Water really comes from there, the rest of the *XLR8R* office is still toiling away in front of their computers like a bunch of suckerzzzzz. BB couldn't be arsed to do the column this month, so the staff had to fill in with some of the things they are majorly hating on about the internet. Like, oh my god, gag me with some LOLcats.



Worst Spam

AdBase emailers' freelancers' spam! UGH. I HATE IT! We are not hiring these people. And why doesn't the "opt out" function actually opt me out?
— Audrey K.

Erection drugs or penis-enlargement pills. I am comfortable with my manhood, thank you. — Ethan H.

When my mom gets spam for penis enlargement. I don't want my mom seeing that stuff. — Kerry M.

The ones with actual photos of another man's penis. — Bryant R.

Anything regarding Stuntwoman Jwaundace Candece. — Ken T.

Roxy Cottontail's events emails. What happened to the Dust La Rock-designed flyers?!? Those I'm happy to get, week in, week out. The new flyers, not so much. — Derek G.

Man-disparaging email forwards and chain letters that I get from certain family members. — Vivian H.

Macy's giftcards. — Tim S.

Worst Blog

The Hype Machine. Why do I dislike this so much? I don't really know—could be the 18pt type ALL OVER THE PAGE. — Audrey K.

Bigstereo.net. These shitheads get the same press releases from the same 18-year-old new-electro producers and write the same thing that 70,000 other blogs write. Awesome. Keep it up, guys. — Fred M.

Any party photos site. Because who really wants to know about all the parties they missed? — Vivian H. I'm sick of the snarky tone in blogs like SFist, Gothamist, Gawker... even the *SF Chronicle's* website. A couple months ago, a 22-year-old and a 34-year-old were broadsided by a Saturn and killed and SFist was like, "I mean, who even drives a

Saturn?" Why does everything have to be snarky? Deal with your emotions, bloggers. — Kerry M.

Worst YouTube Video

I don't know, but I learned a lot of dance moves when I searched for "New Orleans Bounce." I also learned that I will need ass implants to properly do any of them. — Vivian H.

Zack Kim's "Dear Tiesto" — Andrew S.

The one of the dude with the skin problem that made his skin look like bark. I want people to stop sending extreme skin atrocity videos to me. — Kerry M.

Worst... as in best? Lasagna Cat. — Audrey K.

NO MORE HEROES™



HEROES WILL FALL
AND A NEW CHAMPION WILL RISE



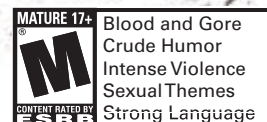
SLASH YOUR WAY TO THE TOP OF THE ASSASSINS ASSOCIATION WITH YOUR TRUSTY BEAM KATANA.



COMPLETE SIDE JOBS FOR EXTRA CASH TO CUSTOMIZE YOUR CHARACTER AND WEAPONS.



BRING THE PAIN WITH AN ARSENAL OF OVER-THE-TOP COMBAT MOVES.



Wii™

EXCLUSIVELY FOR Wii™
www.NoMoreHeroesGame.com
AVAILABLE NOW



UBISOFT™

Droid Behavior

A high-tech trio trades the mantra "Born in East L.A." for the slogan "Eat Sleep Shit Techno."

When you think about minimal techno some places come to mind: Berlin, Detroit... hell, all of Europe. Los Angeles, not so much. Yes, John Tejada and Cytrax hail from here, but promoting techno in the land of plastic surgery and palm trees has always been an uphill battle. Which explains why the founders of Droid Behavior had to trick Southern Californians into joining their fledgling motorik movement. "We printed business cards with the words 'Eat Sleep Shit Techno' and an email address, and passed these out at record stores, clubs, and parties to see who would bite," writes the trio in a group email. "Once we had enough positive and inquisitive emails it was time to start sending out the first newsletters; once we had developed enough momentum we produced our first events."

Not long after, Droid Behavior—which consists of brothers Vidal and Vangelis Vargas (who record as Acid Circus) and Mohamed "Moe" Espinosa (a.k.a. Drumcell)—dropped their first label release at the Detroit Electronic Music Festival in 2003. Inspired by labels like Minus, Axis, Warp, and Raster-Noton—plus the guerrilla marketing tactics of Shepard Fairey—the crew developed an instantly recognizable robot aesthetic; it's been used on releases, flyers for their bi-monthly Interface event, and the Droid stickers that blanket every bus stop, bathroom, and record store they pass.

Among Droid's biggest inspirations are "scummy, rat-ridden warehouses" and the parties therein. The Vargas brothers grew up in East L.A. ("Plenty of lowriders and Jaime Escalante-style after-school programs.") and Espinosa in nearby Hacienda Heights—all three were heavily influenced by the city's rave scene of the mid-'90s. "In the summer [before] my freshman year in high school I was in a backyard punk band and our drummer was always going to undergrounds," recalls Espinosa. "Eventually he started taking me with him and we would exchange mixtapes. I was already experimenting with various multi-track recorders and drum machines, so making electronic music was the next obvious step."

"Frankie Bones, Jeff Mills, Surgeon, and Richie Hawtin were influential," concur the Brothers Vargas. "[Their music] was different from a lot of the trance and house that L.A. was exposed to throughout the '90s. This led us to dig deeper into early Detroit techno and its European counterparts."

The trio originally met at a house party where Vidal and Vangelis were performing on 350 MHz desktops, and they "pretty much clicked instantly." They would go on to release EPs like Acid Circus' *Reduxtion* and Drumcell's *System Error*, exploring various facets of minimal, from spacious and clicky numbers to pounding, loopy robot rockers.

Though weekly annoyances include "flaky promoters, mega-clubs that don't know what they're doing, band-wagoners, being overlooked as artists, and dealing with people's egos," the Droids say they wouldn't leave the City of Lost Angels for anything. "We have all done our fair share of traveling," says Espinosa. "Although I know how important it is to taste other parts of the world, to me there is something special about L.A. that lays thick inside me."

Audio Injection's *Just the Way That I Am* EP is out this month on Droid Behavior. droidbehavior.com



DROID BEHAVIOR, FROM LEFT: VANGELIS VARGAS, MOE ESPINOSA, VIDAL VARGAS

Crap Shoot

T. Raumschmiere and Daniel Meteo celebrate 10 years of shit-slinging.



1. Touring the U.S. with Telefon Tel Aviv and Dabrye in 2002. We did some interviews for some radio stations, and obviously you are not allowed to say "shit" on the radio, so telling listeners which label I represented was hard. *T. Raumschmiere*

2. Recording Nanospeed's *Kopernikus*. I had just moved to Berlin in 1998, and my friend Roland Fiege (a.k.a. Nanospeed) came to visit. My apartment/studio was in a rather fucked-up building, and it was so freezing cold we had to wear gloves and hats while producing. You could see your own breath. That's maybe not a funny story, but a cold one. *T. Raumschmiere*

3. *Shitparade 2003*. Our festival, featuring Dabrye, Pole, Miss Kittin, T. Raumschmiere, Apparat, Bus, Monkeytribe, and A.M.O. *Daniel Meteo*

4. *Drunken artists*. I was waiting to bring an artist to a Shitkatapult label showcase at a festival several years ago. His phone was turned off and he missed at least three trains. When he arrived, he had 25 small bottles of EasyJet whiskey with him but said that he already drank most of them. Right before his set, he took 23 minutes to find his sunglasses, and then broke his guitar

in half "by accident" within two minutes of starting. Although it was a bad day, I was proud: How badly can you misbehave as a small artist on a big lineup? *Daniel Meteo*

5. Being announced as "T. Rammstein" in Atlanta. *T. Raumschmiere*

6. The *Shitkatapult* label night in London. I asked my friend Alex Paterson (of The Orb) to play an ambient set to open this night. He agreed, although it was very little money—and he did great. Then Gwem and a friend played an unbelievable trash-rock show on toy plastic drums. The Mute team was there (for Marco), and could not believe it either. Alex was pretty angry (sorry for that, mate!). I was smiling, but nobody else was until I saw Marco and Sascha Ring [a.k.a. Apparat]. *Daniel Meteo*

7. T. Raumschmiere's last-ever solo techno show. It was the same night as Gwem, if I remember it right. No explanation needed—it was a killer! *Daniel Meteo*

8. The success of the release of the last Apparat album. *T. Raumschmiere*

9. My meeting with the Mayor of Berlin, Klaus Wowereit. Which got cancelled at the last minute, and over nonsense business. *Daniel Meteo*

10. Going to Sao Paulo with Apparat and band. Plus my time tour-managing, DJing, and booking all my friends and artists. *Daniel Meteo*

The anniversary compilation *Smashits* is out now on Shitkatapult. shitkatapult.com

BACARDI® B LIVE™

PRESENTS

A GLOBAL CONCERT EVENT

4.19.08

BAYFRONT PARK MIAMI

INVITE-ONLY, GET YOURS AT

BLIVEMIAMIO8.COM
OR TEXT YOUR 8-DIGIT BIRTH DATE
(MMDDYYYY) TO 36457



THIRSTY FOR LIFE? DRINK RESPONSIBLY.
©2008 BACARDI AND THE BAT DEVICE ARE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS AND B-LIVE AND THE B-LIVE LOGO ARE TRADEMARKS OF BACARDI & COMPANY LIMITED, BACARDI U.S.A., INC., MIAMI, FL. RUM - 40% ALC. BY VOL.

Bird Peterson

Austin's dirty bird serves up bangers and mash-ups as big as Texas.



Producer Bird Peterson—not a jazzman, but he takes his pseudonym from heroes Charlie “Yardbird” Parker and Oscar Peterson—works a USB MIDI keyboard like his tracks do subwoofers: pushing air like jump-man Jordans. And in the last couple years, the 24-year-old native Texan has ridden the internet equally hard and high, using blogs like Discobelle and Gorilla vs. Bear to spread a bevy of remixes influenced equally by B-more club, nu-skool breaks, jump-up, and screwed-down mixtapes.

Before moving to Austin, Peterson (born Andrew Hoke) had started producing in his native Houston, making hip-hop beats for local and South American MCs. But he found his true calling through the Hollerboard (board.low-bee.com), where DJs and producers including Cosmo Baker, Tittsworth, and Dirty South Joe helped Peterson learn how to build to the breakdown and go to town on a vocal line without blowing out the energy early.

“People have misconceived B-more—[they think]

you can take anything on the planet, throw the ‘Sing Sing’ loop [a sample of Salsoul recording artist Gaz] under it, and make it stutter. But that’s not the case at all,” says Peterson. “There is a real art behind making a really good Baltimore club track.”

The names that have gone under Bird Peterson’s bootleggin’ knife include remix favorites and whodathunkits: Future Sound of London, Nelly Furtado, Wu-Tang Clan, Wale, The Who, Naughty by Nature, Bobby Womack, Yung Joc, Spank Rock, Lil Wayne (mashed with Black Sabbath), and Big Country. Originally, his tracks were very funk- and soul-based, but over time Peterson developed a taste for Plump DJs, Fatboy Slim, and Switch, and entered a “more synthy bass-type zone.” The avian also takes cues from the noticeably fierce late ‘90s Houston drum & bass scene and British bassline house, whose influence can be heard on tracks like “Twurk Central” (on last year’s *Hot Noise* LP), an homage to 4x4 garage and Conga Squad. “I’m a big fan of basslines that reflect

absolutely nothing from the rest of the track,” he offers.

Peterson’s aesthetic also looks out for DJs, offering up four mix-friendly bars on the front and back ends of tracks, just like he’d like them prepped for his Serato-assisted mixes, which often blend My Morning Jacket, Queen, Iron & Wine, and Feist into the same set as Daft Punk, Ludacris, vintage DJ Zinc, and Devin the Dude.

As for what’s next, there is an EP with 215: The Freshest Kidz, production on albums from rappers Mugsy Flowz and Praddaman, remixes for Grecco Roman and Cadence Weapon, and Peterson’s own third album. “It’s going to be hotter and noisier than two flaming skeletons in a cat fight on a tin roof in July,” he says.

Bird Peterson’s *Hot Noise* is out now on Solid Trunk. myspace.com/birdpeterson.



M83

SATURDAYS=YOUTH

PRODUCED BY KEN THOMAS
CO-PRODUCED BY EWAN PEARSON
& ANTHONY GONZALEZ

RELEASED APRIL 15 2008

WWW.ILOVEM83.COM • WWW.MYSPACE.COM/M83





Jeremy Jay

A romantic from the City of Angels resculpts the pop landscape.

Los Angeles may quickly be becoming the post-post-punk capital of the States,

with bands like No Age, Ariel Pink, and Health claiming its turf. But amidst Angel Town's noisy clatter, Jeremy Jay, a young, romantic singer/songwriter, has emerged with quietly tempered indie-pop gems more suited to Laurel Canyon than Echo Park. Citing Buddy Holly and Richie Valens as major influences, Jay's debut on Calvin Johnson's K Records showcases his dual passions for '50s doo-wop and French *chansons*, which coalesce into lo-fi, reverb-saturated pop. But don't call it merely "retro," and definitely throw away the predictable Paw Tracks comparisons.

Despite his youthful infatuation with the classic pop legends, Jay's musical upbringing veers a bit from that of other 20-something indie sensations. "My mom and her entire family is from Switzerland," Jay offers. "She liked Jacques Brel, Edith Piaf, Françoise Hardy, and a lot of other French music that's really had an impact on me." Those internationally iconic pop inspirations are strewn all over Jay's recently released *Airwalker* and *We Were There* EPs. The song "Slow Dance," for example, is comprised of *Disintegration*-esque guitar lines, creepy organs sneaking through layers of melody, and Jay's eerily charming monotone voice chanting the word "romance." "Gallop" and "Love Everlasting" take a more traditional K form—they're like lost, lovesick singles from *The Make-Up*.

Yet the romantic sensibilities don't stop there. "I threw a show called Winter Wonder Slow Dance at [L.A. venue] The Smell in December," remembers an excited Jay. "I bought a snow machine, served free hot chocolate, and the girls put up paper snowflakes everywhere—we made it snow right outside The Smell and [founder] Jim Smith was so down!" Theme parties seem to be a running, um, theme in Jay's day-to-day. "I'm throwing a croquet party and picnic at Griffith Park this weekend—I've invited nearly everyone I know," he laughs. "My last gathering was a *Clue* party!"

With his debut long-player, *A Place Where We Could Go*, set for release next month, Jay has already begun work for his next yet-to-be-titled release. "I just get inspired and songs just happen," Jay says frankly. "I usually see something, like a daydream, and [write about] that—it's very visual." If his parties, singles, and forthcoming full-length are any indication of what's in store for this romantic revolutionary, expect nothing short of charming.

Jeremy Jay's *A Place Where We Could Go* is out May 20 on K.
myspace.com/jeremyjay

**JAM
ES PA
NTS WEL
COME**



LP/CD in stores April 29
www.stonestrow.com

Brothers Gonna Work it Out

Hood's Richard and Chris Adams speak on each other's side projects.



RICHARD ADAMS



CHRIS ADAMS

British post-rockers Hood create beautifully evocative music that eschews rock's usual clichés—lyrically, it's as likely to advocate waking up early to absorb the beauty of suburban daybreak as it is to encourage sabotaging local train lines to stop a lover from returning home. Initially inspired by post-rock illuminati such as Bark Psychosis and Disco Inferno, the group subsequently drew influence from cavernous dub, corrupted hip-hop, and contemporary micro-house, sampling Robert Wyatt and working with Anticon's DoseOne and Why? The band's sibling-nucleus of Richard and Chris Adams has now put Hood on hiatus, separating into [The Declining Winter](#) and [Bracken](#), respectively. Below, they talk about each other's current projects. *David Hemingway*

Richard Adams (The Declining Winter) on Bracken

five seconds of, and ignore the rest.

XLR8R: How would you describe your brother's project?

It's the sound of a ghost clattering around in a big old house, knocking pots and pans about and falling down the stairs.

What do you think of Bracken?

It's fantastic. Now I get to hear Chris' songs without actually doing any work [on] them. And he's prolific! Three albums in one year is more than Hood ever managed.

Do you listen to Bracken?

I just whack all [the songs] on iTunes and flick through until I find one I like the first

How would you improve or change Bracken?

Just by changing the words, replacing all the music, sacking the singer, and altering the cover art.

Is this the end of Hood?

Well, playing in front of 10 people at shows was becoming a bit wearing. I'm happier doing something where I have low expectations and I don't have to get involved in the horrors of the music industry. But if someone offers us a million pounds to perform *Cabled Linear Traction* in its entirety, then we might think about it.

Chris Adams (Bracken) on The Declining Winter

as I write this.

XLR8R: How would you describe your brother's band?

The sound of cassette tapes spilling out of the glove-box of a 1970s Datsun Sunny somewhere in the north of England, captured on Super 8 film.

What do you think of The Declining Winter?

Great. It's not as fiddly as the stuff I'm doing. (I don't mean the instrument, as I think there is a fiddle on there.) I mean, it's not... as fiddly.

Do you listen to them?

Yes, they're rehearsing in my basement

How would you improve or change what they're doing?

I'd get them to turn it down—*Curb Your Enthusiasm* is coming on in a minute.

Is this the end of Hood?

By me and Richard releasing records you mean? How does that work?

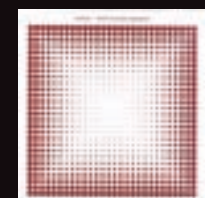
The Declining Winter's *Goodbye Minnesota* is forthcoming on Rusted Rail. Bracken's *We Know About the Need* and *Remixes* are out now on Anticon. A second Bracken album, *Eno About the Need*, limited to one copy, is circulating the world. myspace.com/thedecliningwinter, myspace.com/brackenmusic

SASHA AND JOHN DIGWEED ... JOHN DIGWEED ... SPRING CLUB TOUR 2008 03.27.08 - 04.26.08 POWERED BY BEATPORT.COM

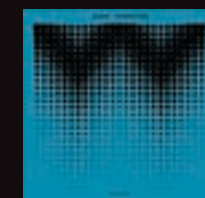
TOUR DATE _ LOCATION _ VENUE

03.27.08 _ MIAMI _ MANSION	04.09.08 _ COLUMBUS _ KARMA	04.18.08 _ MONTERREY _ AUTOCINEMA
03.29.08 _ MIAMI _ ULTRA MUSIC FESTIVAL	04.10.08 _ DETROIT _ CLUTCH CARGOS	04.19.08 _ MEXICO CITY _ ARENA MEXICO
04.02.08 _ BOSTON _ THE ESTATE	04.11.08 _ TORONTO _ KOOL HAUS	04.22.08 _ SEATTLE _ SHOWBOX 5000
04.03.08 _ PHILADELPHIA _ THE FILLMORE @ TLA	04.12.08 _ CHICAGO _ HOUSE OF BLUES	04.23.08 _ VANCOUVER _ FLUSH NIGHTCLUB
04.04.08 _ NEW YORK _ WEBSTER HALL	04.14.08 _ ST. LOUIS _ DANTES	04.24.08 _ PORTLAND _ ROSELAND THEATER
04.05.08 _ WASHINGTON DC _ IBIZA NIGHTCLUB	04.15.08 _ MINNEAPOLIS _ EPIC	04.25.08 _ SAN FRANCISCO _ THE WARFIELD
04.07.08 _ NASHVILLE _ CITY HALL	04.17.08 _ GUADALAJARRA _ FORD ALTERNO	04.26.08 _ COACHELLA _ COACHELLA FESTIVAL

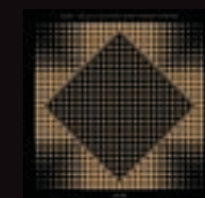
DOWNLOAD THESE AND OTHER ESSENTIAL SASHA AND JOHN DIGWEED RELEASES AT BEATPORT.COM



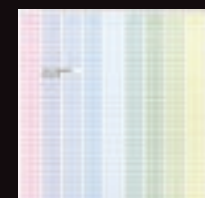
SASHA
'WHO KILLED SPARKY'
EMPIRE



SASHA
'MONGOOSE'
EMPIRE



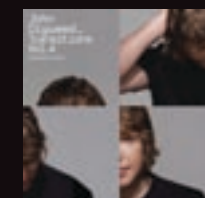
SASHA
'THE EMPIRE COLLECTION: MIXED, UNMIXED, REMIXED'
EMPIRE
OUT APRIL 2008



JOHN DIGWEED
'GRIDLOCK'
RENAISSANCE



JOHN DIGWEED
'WARUNG BEACH REMIXES'
BEDROCK



JOHN DIGWEED
'TRANSITIONS VOL. 4'
RENAISSANCE
OUT APRIL 2008

BUY AN ADVANCE TICKET AT WANTICKETS.COM AND RECEIVE A FREE DOWNLOAD OF SASHA/JOHN DIGWEED MUSIC FROM BEATPORT.COM.

beatport DJSASHA.COM JOHNDIGWEED.COM

Kelpe

A British aquanaut plunges into downtempo's deepest end.



For years, beat heads have waited for an answer to DJ Shadow's

Endroducing, the downtempo masterpiece that helped change the world's view of sample-based music. Shadow's script has been flipped time and again since 1996, from RJD2's more resolutely polished funk loops to Four Tet's quirky, near-folkly cut 'n' pastes to Eliot Lipp's synth-heavy G Funk. But few have come as close to *Endroducing's* multi-layered moods and atmospheres—that head-nodding bass thump, those easy tempos, them crispy snares—as London artist Kelpe does with *Ex-Aquarium*.

Kelpe, born Kel McKeown, isn't working inside the instrumental hip-hop idiom. He's got his own thing going—call it... a life aquatic. From his debut album, 2004's *Sea Inside Body*, McKeown has explored water themes, with tidal synths washing over tangled tendrils of guitar, luminescent hi-hats, and coral-sharp drum kicks. On *Ex-Aquarium*, these references are even more explicit, from the seagull samples in the ebbing and flowing "Whirlwound" to the enigmatic deep-sea cover art by Thogdin Ripley.

"Some of the tracks on the album have an overgrown feel to them, maybe because I was working on them for too long a period of time," says McKeown, when asked to explain the album's title. "I also had a vague notion of something that used to be an aquarium—an ex-aquarium—but all the fish died and it got all festering and full of overgrown oddities."

He explains that this album's more unkempt melodies and drums have a lot to do with changes in his recording process. Following his 2005 EP, *Sunburnt Eyelids*, he

moved operations from a flat with paper-thin walls to a friend's studio, where he began messing around with a drum kit, analog synths, and microphones. "Because I had recorded bits as audio instead of MIDI there was less opportunity to fiddle about intricately with all the melodies, so I got into arranging more natural percussive rhythms and letting them be much looser," he offers. "When I was making *Sea Inside Body*, my slight lack of experience and confidence meant I had to keep the tracks quite neatly structured so I could keep control of them, but I would like to think I let things get a little more out of control on the new album."

Though Kelpe is often compared to Boards of Canada—both deal in faraway-sounding sediments of sound, wistful melodies, and vocal samples from archival radio programs and children's records—his inspirations actually lie somewhere in between Shadow and the utterly ambient soundscapes of Stars of the Lid. "Hearing a lot of the old Mo' Wax stuff got me excited about what can be done with sampling, re-arranging beats, and using a more open-minded palette of sounds, but *The Tired Sounds of Stars of the Lid* really opened me up to the idea of a different kind of music: completely beat-less and stretched out over long periods of time to wash over you in a subconscious way."

Kelpe's *Ex-Aquarium* is out now on DC Recordings. kelpe.co.uk

BEATPORT EXCLUSIVE DIGITAL RELEASES



- A Cezar Cunningham 'Keep On'
- B Young MC and Masta Ace 'Delicious Gutter'
- C Kate Simko 'She Said EP'
- D Claude VonStroke & Justin Martin 'Groundhog Day'
- E The Regisford-Harris Project 'Astral'
- F Quentin Harris 'Mix The Vibe, Timeless Re-Collection'
- G Yankee Zulu 'Who Run Tings? We Run Tings'
- H Jerome Sydenham & Tiger Stripes 'Elevation & F12 Remixes'
- I Huge Hephner 'Pimp Slappin' EP'
- J Ultra 'Delicious Vinyl'
- K Spectral Sound 'Dirtybird'
- L Objektivty 'King Street Sounds'
- M Utensil Recordings 'Ibadan'
- N Siteholder

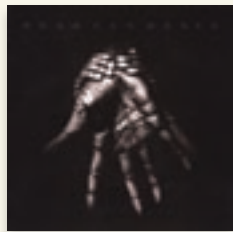


Five Star Miss Kittin

The queen of moody electro-tech picks her **favorite goth records.**



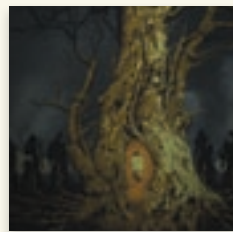
For a full interview with Miss Kittin, visit XLR8R.com/116extras.



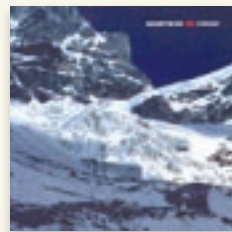
1. Dead Can Dance
Into the Labyrinth (4AD)
Timeless. Lisa Gerrard sings in her own language, from her own deep spiritual dimension. She once stopped a concert because someone was smoking a cigarette, and no one said she was behaving like a diva. I like when her partner [Brendan Perry] sings, too; he sounds like the guardian of their own temple. I miss them, but their records survived their breakup. Totally goth.



2. Bauhaus "Bela Lugosi's Dead" (Small Wonder)
Obvious choice, but let's face it, it's the only great song they wrote. It's unforgettable in one of my favorite movies, *The Hunger*, with Catherine Deneuve, Susan Sarandon, and David Bowie. Primal Scream asked me to choose a song to cover during spare time in the studio, and I took this one. Downloading the lyrics, I discovered it was "Undead" and not "I am dead"... I am still shocked about that, being wrong all these years! It was so much fun to jam.



3. Sunn O))) & Boris
Altar (Southern)
I discovered Sunn O))) through the singer's fiancé, who is a very good friend of mine, and saw them live at the Sonar Festival in Barcelona last year. Two months ago, they did a show in a cave in Paris, where I took a friend who was on painkillers for a dislocated shoulder after saving a girl from being raped... I can tell you, this was a total goth moment, like my head was in a propeller.

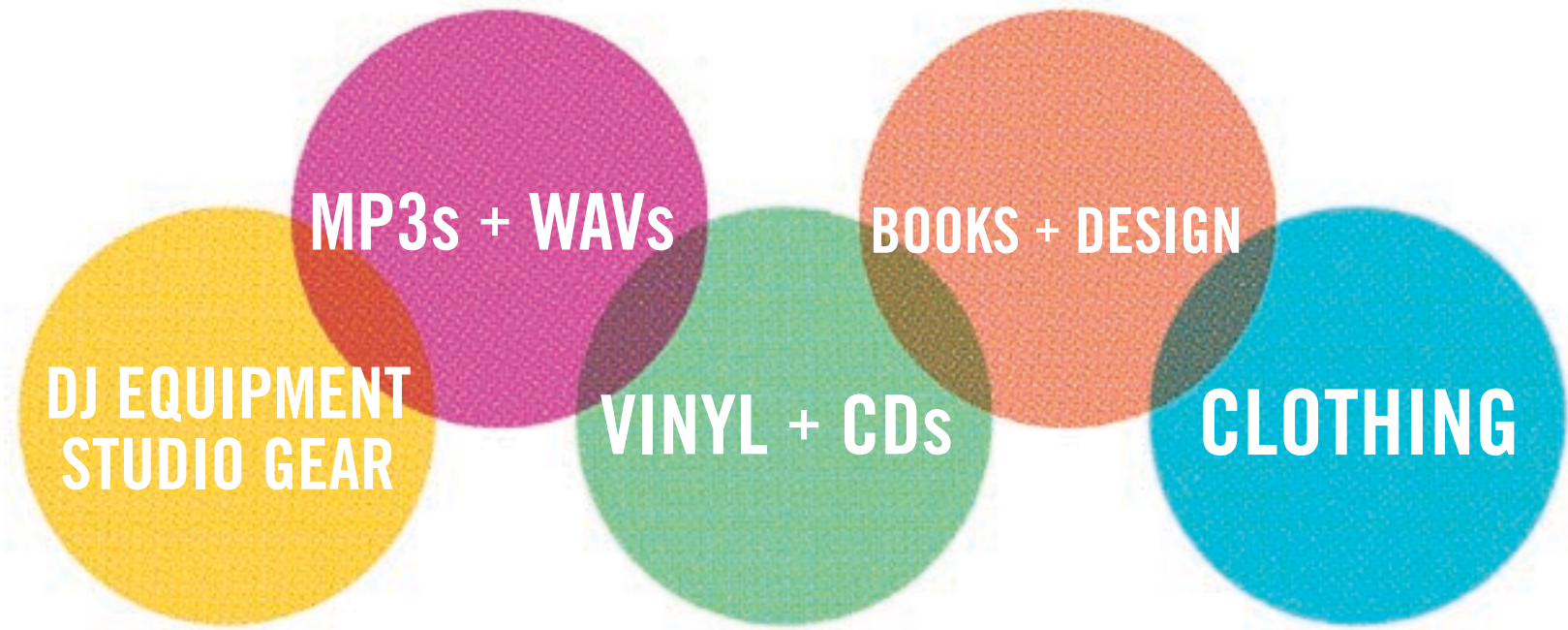


4. Biosphere
Cirque (Touch)
My favorite ambient band. They are from Norway and live in the Arctic Circle in Tromsø. They sampled John Carpenter's *Village of the Damned*, and the voice of Jean-Louis Etienne, a famous French explorer of the North Pole, talking about his spiritual experience alone on the ice. Always so mind-tripping.



5. Joy Division
Closer (Factory)
The kind of music that still haunts me. I listened to it a lot when I was living in Berlin, driving, when it's cold and grey—you know, just to make it a little more intense... It works! A voice from outer space, from the grave. I didn't go and see [Control]. I prefer to keep my own image of Ian Curtis; I am not so interested in his life or how he looked. He is a ghost that doesn't need to be brought back to life.

Miss Kittin's *Batbox* is out now on Nobody's Bizzness. misskittin.com



WE SELL THE STUFF THAT YOU CAN TOUCH.

(and the stuff you can't)

www.turntablelab.com



TURNTABLE LAB LA

323 north fairfax avenue
323.782.0173

OFFERING DAILY
AMUSEMENT



TURNTABLE LAB NY

120 east 7th street
212.677.0675



NEW! TTL ANNEX

our new clothing + book shop
next door to 7th street store

©2007 FIGHTING BOREDOM. THE WORLD IS BECOMING STERILE.
KEEP HOPE ALIVE AT BLOG.TURNTABLELAB.COM

ttlms

Ghostland Observatory

Despite its reputation as a hotbed of live music, Austin, Texas still loves its daily dose of mid-'90s dance crack—at least according to Ghostland Observatory frontman Aaron Behrens. “Everybody loves Jammin’ 105.9!” he crows, citing his favorite local radio station and most recent source of artistic inspiration. “C+C Music Factory, Marky Mark... ’90s, like, sweat dance. It’s the shit! If you listen to the 20-minute block, you’ll hear some Bobby Brown.” His bandmate, drummer/knob-twiddler/keyboard wizard Thomas Turner, prefers slightly more obscure material: “I’ve been listening to this oldies station a lot: Gerry Rafferty, a lot of old jams. I listen to what my son likes—he’s two. He’s listening to Kraftwerk pretty hard right now.”

Ghostland Observatory formed nearly four years ago when Turner and Behrens met each other as members of Waking Helix, a more rock-oriented band. Discovering a mutual attraction to the world of synthesizers and samplers, the two split off and Turner, formerly a rave organizer, founded Trashy Moped Records to promote and release Ghostland’s records. Their debut, *delete.i.eat.meat*, hit the streets in 2005. Behrens and Turner are currently holed up in their Austin rehearsal space, preparing for a spring tour to support their third record, *Robotique Majestique*, also on Trashy Moped.

Ghostland’s repertoire has always defied easy genre classification, with songs jumping from funk to rock to electro-disco, and *Robotique Majestique* is no exception. Even Turner seems hesitant to categorize his work. “We just make music that we like. We try to stay different—we never really tried to figure out what genre it is, we just do what we do,” he offers, his shrug on the other end of the line almost audible.

After *Robotique*’s psychedelic, grandiose “Opening Credits,” the album dives into a series of driving dance numbers, anchored by funky synth hooks, disco-inspired keyboard machinations, occasional IDM clicks and snaps (possibly a nod to Turner’s rave-happy past), and references to Daft Punk and Behrens’ beloved C + C Music Factory. The wave of dance numbers meets an abrupt end with “HFM,” a lo-fi dance-punk shout-fest that would easily find a place among stacks of Atari Teenage Riot and Add N to (X) records. The only common element, it seems, is Behrens’ distinctive wail, which veers from Axl Rose-style falsetto to manly power-rock grunt.

Sonically, *Robotique* packs an exponentially stronger punch than the group’s previous work, a development indicative of their musical growth as well as a new focus on production techniques. “The first record was done in a duplex,” Turner recalls. “The second was done in an office space, and the third record was done in a barn. We definitely spent more time on production. We’ve been doing low-budget for such a long time, this was the first time we got a proper mastering job.” It’s a big step up from Turner’s beer-truck-driving gig and Behrens’ mailroom job, but the band remains grounded. “We are civilians!” declares Turner. “Not full-time rock stars.”

Robotique Majestique is out now on Trashy Moped.
ghostlandobservatory.net

Behrens-Turner Overdrive takes care of indie-dance business, one C+C Music Factory reference at a time.



XLR8R TV

New episodes every Tuesday.

View episodes weekly on XLR8R.com and YouTube.

Subscribe to the podcast through iTunes or go to revision3.com/xlr8rtv.



Episode 44
**Are You Ready
for Planningtorock?**

Episode 42
**What You Talkin'
Bout, Willits? Part I**

Episode 40
**Mack-in'
With Lifesavas**

GHOSTLAND OBSERVATORY'S AARON BEHRENS (LEFT) AND THOMAS TURNER

• Elements
Spring Forward

Crazy tees, USBs, and all the things you need to thaw out your style.



1



2



3

1. Hot Air Acceleration Zero t-shirt (\$54)
 krudmart.com

2. Homeroom Kaboom ring (\$290)
 homeroomclothing.com

3. Kid Robot Big Checkers hoodie (\$175)
 kidrobot.com

4. NifNaks Gizzy the Data Worm 4GB USB drive (\$68)
 nifnaks.com

5. NifNaks Paisley the Caterpillar hair clip (\$20)
 nifnaks.com

6. Homeroom Game Over lace locks (\$46)
 homeroomclothing.com

7. Weare 2007 scarf (£35)
 weare.movingbrands.com

8. Hot Air Float t-shirt (\$54)
 krudmart.com

9. Deth P. Sun Dino Rider t-shirt (\$18)
 giantrobot.com

10. Hot Air 80 Days t-shirt (\$54)
 krudmart.com



7



4



8



6



9



10

Kicking Game

Shoe shoppin' with Bay Area rapper and self-professed sneaker ho Lyrics Born.



On Lyrics Born's new album, *Everywhere At Once*, the East Bay-based rapper makes a pretty bold claim: "My name is Lyrics Born, and I'm a shoe ho," he announces on a skit entitled "Shoe Hoes Anonymous." "It's a vice," LB tells us. "You gotta understand, the shoe game—the competition is at an all-time high. I'm going to Australia to tour with Kanye and Cypress Hill and Pharoahe Monch, and I know they shoe game is wicked, man, so I can't be coming out there in a pair of flip-flops. I gotta have something that's tight." Fair enough. To get him laced up for the tour, we brought him down to Shoe Biz II on Haight Street in San Francisco and saw how far we could stretch his wallet. *Ken Taylor*

1. Undrcrwn x Adidas ADICRWN-TMAC
Undrcrwn's an L.A. brand. A lot of times independent companies will co-brand sneakers with a big name, and that's like this Tracy McGrady shoe right here. It's *clean*. It's got some *Do the Right Thing* pattern on it, and that's why I like these.

2. Puma California x Shoe Biz
I go all over the world and I represent the Bay. This is a Bay Area exclusive, with the Giants colors, spray-paint drips on 'em, and three different shoelaces. I'll just walk with the laces like that, make you see all three colors. *[laughs]* 'Cause I could walk down the street and people would know that's the Bay right there.

3. Futura x Clarks Wallabee
That's not a Wallabee that your Uncle Johnny's gonna buy. Futura's my man, you know. He did a lot of artwork on the UNKLE projects and stuff like that with my man Shadow back in the day. I've seen these in a magazine but never in person. You see, it's got the camo shoelace right there, and it's got his tag with the art on it. It's like some Ghostface Killah from the future. The trick with Clarks is that gum sole, man. You gotta keep it crispy, and it's not always easy.

4. Undrcrwn x Adidas ADICRWN-Gilbert Arenas
That's what I'm talking about when I say I don't follow brands. It's gotta be creative, man. You won't ever see another shoe

that looks like that. Everything that's tight, it's gonna be a limited edition, and you really gotta be up on it.

5. Reebok Tron Pump
Oh, these are *clean*... the *Tron* version. See, I'm a '80s baby, you know what I mean? That's when the Pumps came out. And when you're from the Bay, you gotta have a pair of white shoes. I remember my man MC Serch used to have a pair of these back when he had his high-top fade. I'm gonna get that going again too.

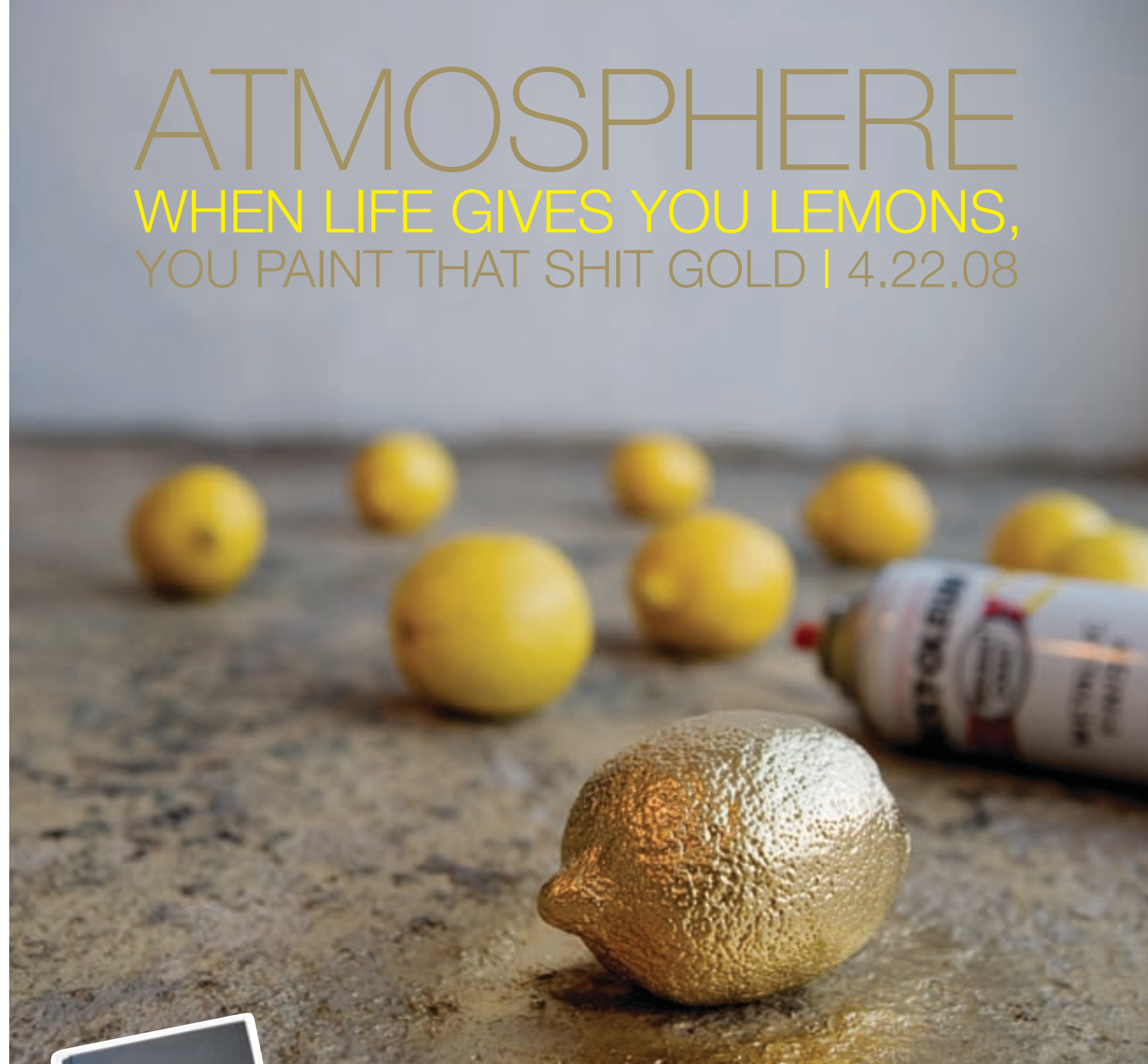
Lyrics Born's *Everywhere At Once* is out April 22 on Anti-. lyricsborn.com, shoebiz.com



To see video from this shopping spree, visit XLR8R.com/tv

ATMOSPHERE

WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS, YOU PAINT THAT SHIT GOLD | 4.22.08



*Special limited deluxe edition packaged as a 40 page gold embossed hard cover book, featuring an illustrated children's story written by Slug and a bonus DVD with over an hour of live footage and extras.

ON TOUR: w/Abstract Rude
4/22 - Chicago, IL - Metro
4/23 - Chicago, IL - Metro
4/24 - Toronto, ON - Opera House
4/26 - Boston, MA - The Roxy
4/27 - New York, NY - Webster Hall
4/29 - Washington, DC - 9:30 Club
5/02 - Austin, TX - Emo's
5/03 - Austin, TX - Emo's
5/05 - Phoenix, AZ - Marquis Theater

5/06 - Los Angeles, CA - Henry Fonda Theatre
5/07 - Los Angeles, CA - Henry Fonda Theatre
5/08 - San Francisco, CA - The Regency
5/09 - San Francisco, CA - The Regency
5/12 - Portland, OR - Crystal Ballroom
5/13 - Seattle, WA - Showbox
5/14 - Vancouver, BC - Commodore Ballroom
5/16 - Salt lake City, UT - In The Venue
5/17 - Denver, CO - Ogden Theatre
5/18 - Denver, CO - Ogden Theatre



www.rhymesayers.com | www.myspace.com/atmosphere | www.fifthelementonline.com

©2008 Rhymesayers Entertainment, LLC 2409 Hennepin Ave. Mpls., MN 55405 office: 612.977.9870 fax: 612.977.9871 email: info@rhymesayers.com



Justus Köhncke

Kompakt's songbird frees his inner kink.

Last year, Justus Köhncke, the German minimal techno producer and staple on Kompakt's roster, burrowed around deep inside his brain and eviscerated a bright pastel-and-glitter-coated cheese-pop sliver of himself. He called it Kinky Justice.

The sliver—what he now refers to as his “little friend”—took on a life of its own and began crooning synth-laden cover ballads. (You've never *really* considered the strip-tease potential of Iggy Pop's “Nightclubbing” until you've heard Kinky's heavily accented take.)

For his first two albums, it had been a schizoid battle between Kinky Justice and Justus Köhncke, his saner and more serious host. “After years of trying to integrate the vocal side of things and this kind of kitsch—that slow-ballad part of my work—I was a bit fed up,” says Köhncke from his home in Cologne during a quick between-tour break. “Doing live gigs in this sort of club context, at like three in the morning, [playing] a ballad, singing live, and literally taking my pants off was to little avail.”

He seems pissed off at himself as he explains his old persona—like he's confessing it for the first time, a recovering addict to his own compulsive ridiculousness. “My songs are meant to be beautiful and [to] move the people,” he says.

The brain's serious side produced this spring's *Safe and Sound*, an hour of cerebral thump with an emotional spread that feels cathartic, as expansive as Kinky Justice is ridiculous. “It's still a bit split. I have my dark side and my romantic side,” he explains.

Indeed. “Parage” is full of dancefloor-meltdown tech-funk and computer-tweaked

disco—all giddy, sequin-laced string arpeggios, intense four-on-the-floor beats, and porn-store guitar lines. He flips these around on tracks like the drawn-out, monochromatic title cut and “\$26,” an iron-plated minimal beast that feels like you're traversing the guts of an iron foundry...with laser beams careening around you. Yes, laser beams. Like it's an epiphany, Köhncke practically shouts his definition of the album: “It's a streamlined, in-your-face, electronic-future, science-fiction disco, uh, laser thing.”

Yet on “Feuerland,” his extremely faithful, masterful take on Michael Rother's brooding Krautrock classic, he flips the script again, further solidifying his schizophrenic approach. “For years I used that track in DJ sets,” he offers. “Young people with [their eyes wide open] and spiky hair would freak on the track.”

An intentional ambient pause, “Feuerland” is a full-on “fuck you, this is finally me” break that corrupts the album's dancing flow in the best way possible, like Kinky Justice unexpectedly rearing his head. “It feels so good for me psychologically,” says Köhncke. “It's really weird. I really think of Justus as a different person now. I hope this doesn't get worse and I need to see a doctor.”

Justus Köhncke's *Safe and Sound* is out now on Kompakt. myspace.com/justuskoehncke

BETTYE LAVETTE
 BILLY BRAGG
 BOB MOULD
 CADENCE WEAPON
 DEVOTCHKA
 ERSI ARVIZU
 GALACTIC
 JOE HENRY
 ISLANDS
 LYRICS BORN
 MAN MAN
 MICHAEL FRANTI
 NICK CAVE AND
 THE BAD SEEDS
 TIM FITE
 THE WEAKERTHANS

DOWNLOAD THE ANTI
 SAMPLER FOR FREE

ANTI- WWW.ANTILABELBLOG.COM



Spin Cycle



Shy Child



eMusic, the online MP3 seller, has started its own A&R department for the launch of eMusic Selects, an in-house boutique digital label. Its first signings are indie bands **High Places** and **Breathe Owl Breathe**. They're not the only online music pusher doing it, either. RCRD LBL, the new legal-download blog and label, has scored an exclusive

track from Matthew Dear entitled "Don't Go This Way." Check it at rcrdbl.com.

For the first time ever, March's **South by Southwest** conference and festival in Austin was broadcast live for three days on DIRECTV's Channel 101.

Check out Crosstown Rebels' new music and

video podcasts from **Damian Lazarus** and **Seth Troxler** at crosstownrebels.com.

This year's Terrastock Festival will be held at Louisville, KY's Melwood Arts Center from June 19-22, and will feature **Acid Mothers Temple**, **Bardo Pond**, **Wooden Shjips**, **MV&EE With The Golden**

Road, **Kinski**, and more of the usual noisy suspects. For info, visit terrastock.co.uk.

Detroit dusty-groove diggers were left speechless after a fire claimed the apartment building that housed **Peoples Records**. Coincidentally it was also in that building that **Derrick May** produced Detroit techno classics "Strings of

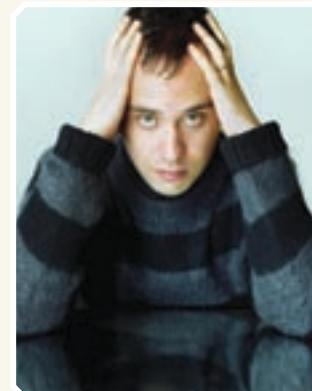
Life" and "Nude Photo" in the late '80s. Peoples' owner Brad Hales is looking for old photos of the store. If you have any, email him at peoplesrecordsdetroit@gmail.com.

Visionaire, the multi-platform high-end art-project publisher/producer, teamed up with MINI recently to release Visionaire 53 Sound,

STOKED!!!

Expect new records from from Blue Sky Black Death (Babygrande), El Perro Del Mar (The Control Group), Shy Child (Kill Rock Stars), Elephant Man (VP), Kidz in the Hall (Duck Down), and Robert Hood (Fabric) in the months to come.

Suction Records Closes Up Shop



Toronto IDM-electro purveyors Suction Records have officially decided to close up shop after 10 years (despite being inactive since about 2003). Proprietors **Solvent** (Jason Amm; pictured left) and **Lowfish** (Gregory De Rocher) recently wrapped up a short tour entitled Now We Are Dead (with an eponymous 12"), and will continue to record for other labels and perform under their own guises. Solvent's two-disc best-of compilation, *Demonstration Tape (1997-2007)*, is out now on Ghostly International.

a collection of sound pieces by **Cindy Sherman**, **Christian Marclay**, **Cat Power**, and others. Including five 12" picture discs, two CDs, and a MINI Clubman vinyl killer (a toy car that "plays" records as it drives in their grooves), the set is limited to 4,000. Snag one at visionaireworld.com.

Ready to lay down some scrilla in the hope that you've discovered the next **Banksy**? Check out the Helium Foundation's recommendations for up-and-coming modern artists at heliumfoundation.com. **Antony Hegarty** (of **The Johnsons**) designed a spe-

cial gown in partnership with online clothing retailer yoox.com. It was auctioned around Valentine's Day, and the proceeds went to support the Sylvia Rivera Law Project, a gender-identity organization in New York.

R.I.P. **Conrad O. Johnson**, leader of the **Kashmere High School Stage Band** and owner of Kram Records, the label that issued the Band's eight albums. He died in Houston in February at the age of 92.



Mixtape by Hamburger Eyes' Ray Potes

- 2Pac "Hit Em Up"**
The sickest beef rap of all time—hands down.
- 2Pac "Ambition Az a Ridah"**
G life as told by a G.
- 2Pac "Fuck the World"**
Classic 2Pac, keeping it simple.
- 2Pac "Str8 Ballin"**
The definition of ballin'.
- 2Pac "Bury Me a G"**
Finger on the trigger, 'til the end of time.
- 2Pac "Heartz of Men"**
The science of a G.
- Makaveli "Hail Mary"**
The madness of a G.
- 2Pac "Tradin' War Stories"**
Military minds, criminal grinds.
- 2Pac "Shorty Wanna Be a Thug"**
As it was in the beginning.
- 2Pac "Thugz Mansion"**
Where else would thugs go when they die?



Ray Potes is the founder of photo 'zine and collective **Hamburger Eyes**. Their first book, *Inside Burgerworld*, is out now through powerHouse Books. burgerworldchronicles.com

Currently on the XLR8R jukebox:

- Débruit *Coupé Décalé* (Musique Large)
- John Maus *Love Is Real* (Upset the Rhythm)
- The Teenagers *Reality Check* (XL)
- The Mars Volta *The Bedlam in Goliath* (Universal)
- Studio *West Coast* (Info)
- Daedelus *Denies the Day's Demise* (Ninja Tune)
- Thurston Moore *Psychic Hearts* (Geffen)
- Lynsey De Paul *Greatest Hits* (Repertoire)
- Hercules and Love Affair *S/T* (DFA/EMI)
- Disfear *Live the Storm* (Relapse)



;D Phone Pix! From Daedelus

Getting ready for the Next to Last Festival in Athens, GA

Daedelus' *Live at Low End Theory* is out now on Alpha Pup. myspace.com/daedelusdarling



STATUS THE MAG

WITH HIS LONGTIME PARTNER GONE, SOME SERIOUS ISSUES ON HIS MIND, AND A NEW ALBUM UNDER HIS BELT, HOUSTON RAPPER **BUN B** KEEPS IT MORE REAL THAN EVER.

The past 12 months have brought a full range of emotions for Bun B. After laying the foundation for Southern rap for the past 15 years, Bun and his longtime partner-in-rhyme Pimp C were finally getting their just props: Their group UGK's critically lauded double-disc *Underground Kingz* debuted at #1 in August, while their OutKast collaboration, "International Players Anthem," bumped worldwide. But on December 4, 2007—just two days before the Port Arthur, TX duo was nominated for a Grammy—Pimp C was found dead in Hollywood's Mondrian Hotel.

The coroner's office ruled that Pimp, who was just 33, died from a combination of the prescription-strength cough syrup in his system and sleep apnea.

The two had obvious differences: Pimp C was loud and flamboyant in his delivery and personal habits; like Kool G. Rap's calmer Southern cousin, Bun B is measured in demeanor and conservative in dress, and known for calculated, machine-gun-like rhymes. Nonetheless, it was easy to imagine these two rapping together forever. When Pimp was incarcerated on assault charges from 2002 to 2005, Bun used his platform as one of rap's most in-demand guest MCs to insert the mantra "Free Pimp C" into every last appearance.

Fortunately, after Pimp C passed, the still-grieving Bun B already had the answer to "What's next?" in his back pocket. Recorded primarily last fall (while UGK was also sketching an *Underground Kingz* follow-up, which Bun says is still on its way), *II Trill* is the album where Bernard "Bun B" Freeman fully embraces his role as the Ice Cube of the South, or perhaps Nas' country cousin. Though he has always spiked UGK's Southern-fried G Funk with wisdom (see the life-affirming "One Day") and a seething anger (take 1994's police-brutality treatise "Protect & Serve"), Bun's 2006 solo debut, *Trill*, didn't build on these inclinations the way his highly informed interviews might have led one to hope. On *II Trill*'s "Get Yo Issue," however, "Big Dick Cheney" sets his sights on crooked officers, hypocritical politicians, and perverted preachers. "If It Was Up to Me," with its Junior Reid hook, tackles the environment and gentrification. Lest anyone think that he's gone soft, "City of Syrup" is a classic Houston anthem, while single "Real Gangster" clocks studio thugs.

"I wanted to bring that old Rap-A-Lot sound back, and recreate the type of records that people like John Bido used to make," Bun says, referring to the unsung producer behind the Geto Boys'

early classics. Along with Houston beatmakers like Cory Mo and Bigg Tyme, *II Trill* also features a collaboration with Expensive Taste, the super-group made up of Paul Wall, Skinhead Rob, and Travis Barker ("Travis and I [both] ride Cadillacs so that shit gotta bang in the trunk," Bun says).

This interview—conducted as Bun returned home to Houston following the Grammys (where "International Player's Anthem" was nominated for Best Rap Performance by a Duo or Group)—came amidst an eventful week which also included the arrival of the coroner's report on Pimp's death and Bun's first live appearance (at Houston's Warehouse Live) since his partner's passing.



"YOU AIN'T ALWAYS GONNA BE AN ARTIST BUT YOU'RE ALWAYS GONNA BE A HUMAN"

***XLRRR:* Did the coroner's report on Pimp C's death answer all of your questions?**

Bun B: For me, it wasn't about asking questions. When someone passes away you have to think about what you learned from them, and what should be taken away from it. You look at things like prescription cough syrup being one of the causes, not an overdose but obviously a contributing factor... You have to look at yourself and anything unhealthy you might be doing. When you look at Pimp and a young, talented person like Heath Ledger and take these things into perspective, maybe you just have to be a little more cautious.

When we first tried to do this interview last year, you decided to attend the Jena 6 rally in Louisiana instead of coming to New York. And you're carving a more topical path on *II Trill*. Has

anything specific spurred you to become more politically minded?

I'm always standing up for my community. The reality is UGK has never had any real light or attention paid to them, so it would seem a lot of what you see us do is new. Prior to [*Underground Kingz*] I didn't really have a publicist. There was nobody calling anybody, saying, "Bun's down here helping these people." I don't really do things for [recognition]. It's not about that. As a human, you've gotta keep it one hunnid [percent] and stand up for motherfuckers that can't stand up for themselves. People stood up for me at various times in my life. If you don't want to do it when you're an artist, then don't. You ain't always gonna be an artist but you're always gonna be a human, and there's always gonna be some fucked-up shit going on to your people. You're gonna have to take a stand at some point.

"UGK REPRESENTED FOR PEOPLE THAT
DON'T GET SECOND CHANCES."

What did you want to do with this album?

For lack of a better description, I wanted to get my Cube on.

What about Ice Cube do you respect?

I finally got to meet Cube [when] we did a remix [of Beyoncé's] "Soldier" together, and he was just who I thought he was. That's something I haven't really been able to say about a lot of people. I was able to say that about Kool G. Rap, DJ Premier, Lord Jamar. I've been fucking with Premier a long time. We never recorded any music together but we're very good friends. We build on totally different issues. If the only way you build with other artists is as an artist, you ain't learning shit.

On "Get Yo Issue," you really go in on cops, politicians, and preachers...

I'm speaking towards the fake preachers, the fake policemen, the fake politicians. Are all of them bad? Of course not. We'd be ignorant to think that just because somebody do a certain thing for a living, they wasn't no good. Just because he's a cop don't make him a bad person. Just because he's a drug dealer don't make him a bad person.

What inspired you to write that song?

It was when your man got caught in the bathroom in Minnesota. Senator Larry Craig. That did it. I said, "These motherfuckers are going too far with this." It's not just national politicians. We got people representing districts in these cities and they're not beholden to their constituents. Because people have let this shit go on for so long, these issues are getting out of hand. I'm not trying to stand on no pulpit, by no means... but it's easy to throw rocks when that sin isn't associated with you. If everybody held everybody according to the worst shit they've ever done, we'd all be hit with rocks.

Has Barack Obama's success given you more faith in the system?

I don't want the assumption to be made that I support Obama. I love what Obama represents, and I love also what Hillary represents. The fact that they're able to realistically run for office is

something we should definitely be praising. I want to make sure when I put my support behind someone it is very clear, because I know a lot of people that don't know too much about this political system are looking for me to help put them in the right direction. In the next four years there has to be improvements made in the inner cities—no ifs, ands, or buts. I'm not gonna stand behind any candidate that isn't prepared to help us address the shit that directly affects us.

People ask you for advice on things like voting?

In the hood, it's a reverse-psychology thing. You almost have to trick people into doing shit sometimes. I try to tell people, "That's why shit's fucked up here, that's why you can't get a job. That's why the paint's peeling in [your kids'] classroom. Because you ain't used the power you got to try and change this shit." It's that simple. I haven't always voted, man. I'm not gonna sit here and act holier than thou. I've been disillusioned like other people so I can understand their frustration. All I've ever done is give people the game I got. I didn't [always] have that game.

Why is it that UGK didn't really tour that much?

UGK used to do probably 120 shows a year, two a night sometimes. It was just in small towns that don't get any media coverage, like Hazlehurst, Mississippi. There was an infamous club in Lafayette, Louisiana called Strawberry's that held 2,500 people, 'til five or six in the morning. We were there every other week. People used to come from other states. I'd drive from Port Arthur to see people perform at that club. It was that insane. The whole reason UGK has the following we have in the South is we were the people that went to your town, when nobody else came. Because we were from Port Arthur, Texas—50,000 people. No one ever came to our town, feel me? We felt it was our duty to go to these [places].

You're going to be touring behind this album, though?

Southern artists don't tour in the formal sense. We go out and do dates. This is gonna be the first time





"I'M SPEAKING TOWARDS THE FAKE PREACHERS,
THE FAKE POLICEMEN, THE FAKE POLITICIANS."

I've ever [done] a genuine tour. UGK was always an organic thing. A lot of that was due to Pimp—if it wasn't right, it wasn't happening. Because we represented for people that don't get second chances, you gotta be real smart and thorough about every decision. Every little decision not only affects our lives but it affects the people that we employ, the people we love, and the people we stand up for. We always tried to be real with people [and they] respected us for being human with them. We did a lot of balling but we made records like "Hi Life," talking about the conflict of being a street cat and still having faith in God, and wondering how God's looking upon you based on your actions. That was a reoccurring theme in our songs because that

was a reoccurring theme in our life.

You've always called UGK country rap, but blues is probably more of an accurate description.

It's because of our parents. It's really that simple. We make music with the sensibility of the music we heard growing up.

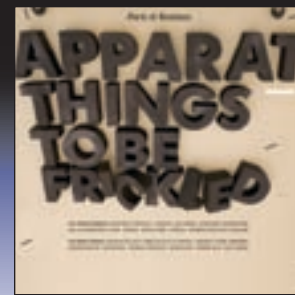
What was it like to step back on the stage without Pimp?

It was probably the first time I cried on stage. It was just real. But there wasn't many dry eyes in the room. I'm not the only person that loves Pimp C, and I know it. The crowd goes through it, too, [so] I

gotta help them get through this the right way. "One Day" and "Hi Life" are powerful testimonies. I never really understood, until the last couple years, how much those records meant to people. It's a very, very real thing.

Hi Trill is out April 29 on Rap-A-Lot Records. bunbonline.com, rapalotrecords.com

For extras from this Bun B interview, visit XLR8R.com/116extras.



APPARAT
Things To Be Frickled: Parts & Remixes 2CD

Things To Be Frickled is a 2CD set compiling remixes by and for Apparat (Sascha Ring), whose 2007 release *Walls* appeared on too many year-end best-of lists to even mention. Artists include Paul Kalkbrenner, Thomas Fehlmann, Lusine, Monolake, Swayzak and many more.

shitkatapult



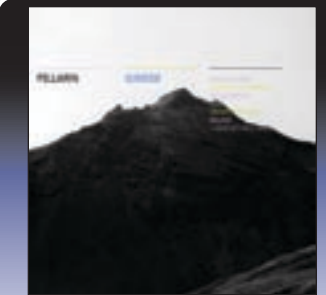
SASCHA FUNKE
Mango CD/2LP

After several 12" releases and remix projects, Sascha presents *Mango*, a fully-ripe evocation of the six months he spent in Aix-en-Provence. No four-to-the-floor techno here, these are beautifully crafted songs and the most powerful fusion of electronic and organic sounds you're likely to hear.



VARIOUS ARTISTS
Monika Bärchen: Songs for Bruno, Knut & Tom CD

Dancefloor minimalism meets heart-wrenching melody! Celebrating 10 years and 60 releases, Monika brings you a special birthday compilation. Compiled by label boss Gudrun Gut, *Monika Bärchen* features all exclusive tracks by Robert Lippok (To Rococo Rot), Barbara Morgenstern, Quarks and 12 others.



PELLARIN
Gundso CD/LP

The 3rd full-length release by Lars Pellarin (Printer, Pellarin & Lenler) is an abstract yet rhythmic electronic meditation on his Danish birthplace, Gundso. Microscopic electronic fizzles, bass pulses and sheets of ambience are combined to create a deep, moody and thrilling record.

STATLER & WALDORF



AGF
Words Are Missing CD

Vocalist, producer, label-owner and e-poet AGF (aka Antye Greie) returns with her 4th solo album, utilizing as a palette the sound of the human voice, beats and drones to address the phenomenon of silence and impeded communication. Housed in a gorgeous digipack with 20-page booklet.

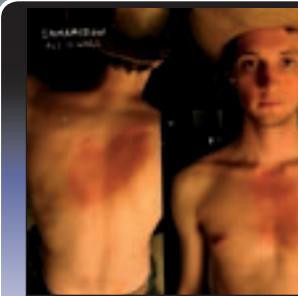
AGF PRODUCTION



CLARO INTELECTO
Metanarrative CD/2LP

Manchester-based Mark Stewart's acclaimed *But This Chicken Proved Falsehearted* taps the deep well of Appalachian folk and fuses it with subtle electronics. Coupled with Nico Muhly's orchestration and Valgeir Sigurðsson's production, *All Is Well* may already be the best record of 2008.

MODERNLOVE



SAMAMIDON
All Is Well CD/LP

Germany's legendary label-owner, remixer and experimentalist presents his non-techno follow-up to the massive *Klick Revolution*. Inspired by a mix of *Suicide*, *Trent Reznor* and *Joy Division*, and including lyrics by Russian poet Joseph Brodsky and Winston Tong (Tuxedomoon), Brinkmann once again charts the dark territories. Breathtaking.

Brinkmann



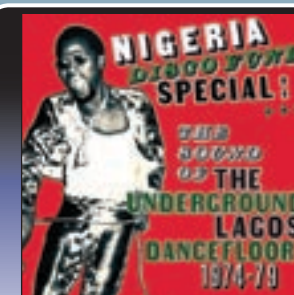
THOMAS BRINKMANN
When Horses Die CD

Germany's legendary label-owner, remixer and experimentalist presents his non-techno follow-up to the massive *Klick Revolution*. Inspired by a mix of *Suicide*, *Trent Reznor* and *Joy Division*, and including lyrics by Russian poet Joseph Brodsky and Winston Tong (Tuxedomoon), Brinkmann once again charts the dark territories. Breathtaking.



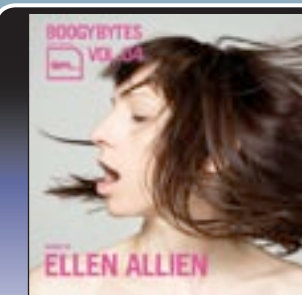
BORKO
Celebrating Life CD/LP

Influenced by his childhood prog-rock LPs, Jim O'Rourke and warm electronics, Borko is the project of Iceland's Björn Kristiansson, film composer and music teacher. Awash with hazy beats, tumbling samples, guitars and trumpets, *Celebrating Life* is a paean to the sun and snow, good food, crazy parties and mirror-balls.



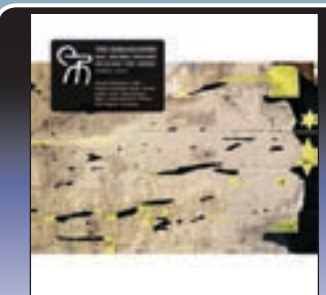
VARIOUS ARTISTS
Nigeria Disco Funk Special: The Sound of the Underground Lagos Dancefloor 1974-79 CD/2LP

Another amazing collection from Soundway, a blistering batch of heavy dancefloor grooves from urban Lagos in the '70s. Rare tracks from well-known players like Bongos Ikwue and Mono Mono's Joni Hastrup alongside cult bands Asiko Rock Group, SJOB Movement and Jay-U Experience.



ELLEN ALLIEN
Boogy Bytes Vol. 04 CD

Eagerly awaited, finally delivered! Ellen Allien has managed to squeeze into her schedule the 4th edition of BPitch's infamous *Boogy Bytes* series. After Kiki, Sascha Funke & Modeselektor, it is now up to Ellen to deliver her new mix! Bouncy, sexy and most definitely off the beaten track.



THE EMBASSADORS (FEAT. MICHEL ONGARU)
Healing The Music CD

Debut release by this international music collective formed by reed player/producer Hayden Chisolm (Root 70, Pluramon, Flanger). Featuring vocals by Kenyan Michel Ongaru, *Healing The Music* transcends all of the trivial music that seems to burden us in these times.

Nonplace

These titles available at fine independent record stores or online at www.forcedexposure.com

Retailers: request wholesale information from fe@forcedexposure.com

WORDS: [PATRICK SISSON](#) PHOTOS: [ANOUCK BERTIN](#)

ADOLESCENT TEEN DREAMS

M83'S ANTHONY GONZALEZ COMPOSES A BITTERSWEET SYMPHONY FROM HAZY SYNTHS
AND CRYSTAL-CLEAR ADOLESCENT MEMORIES.





What, exactly, does it mean when you're 26, it's 2008, and you still harbor a schoolboy's crush on Molly Ringwald?

If you're Anthony Gonzalez, the French producer behind M83, it means picking album-cover models is easy.

"When we were at the modeling agency in New York, I saw this ginger girl," he says, grinning as he refers to the redheaded Ringwald dead-ringer on the cover of his new album *Saturdays=Youth*. "I knew we needed her."

A cast of high school stereotypes straight from *The Breakfast Club*—preppie, geek, goth—surround the girl on the cover, creating an instantly recognizable homage to John Hughes' 1985 classic. "I really fell in love with the atmosphere of teen movies," Gonzalez confesses, as we sit in his recording studio in Antibes, France, which is adorned with framed posters of *Pretty in Pink*, *Say Anything...*, and *The Breakfast Club*. "The soundtracks were perfect and the characters were so charismatic."

The posters are only part of the inspiration for *Saturdays=Youth*, a collection of '80s-inspired electronic tracks that's a hazy, grandiose tribute to adolescence. The record magnifies the indulgent synths, exaggerated emotions, and campy vocals of previous efforts to the power of 10, while exploring the most iconic soundtrack category of all time: high school.

As the fresh-faced, soft-spoken Gonzalez discusses the album and his own memories of being a teenager—skateboarding through the streets of Cannes in the afternoon and smoking weed on the beach at dusk listening to The Cocteau Twins and Tears for Fears—it is clear that that period's impact still lingers. "I think my teenage years were a mix of the movies *Nowhere* and *Dazed and Confused*," he says. "I just wanted to recreate the feeling of those years. I think it was one of my best periods."

BLUE SKIED AN' CLEAR

On "Birds," the brief leadoff track from M83's 2003 breakout album *Dead Cities, Red Seas & Lost Ghosts* (Mute), a robotic voice repeats the mantra "*Sun is shining/Birds are singing/Flowers are growing/Clouds are looming/And I am flying.*"

Walking through the neighborhood where Gonzalez lives, it's easy to locate that exact wavelength. A maze of private drives, stucco houses, and blind curves occasionally tested by fearless Frenchmen on scooters, the area is sleepy and anonymous-feeling compared to most of its flashy coastal surrounds. The pebbled beaches and steel-blue Mediterranean waters of the Côte d'Azur make Antibes, in the South of France, a haven for the rich and retired, with glamorous movie premieres in nearby Cannes and a glut of pleasure boats bobbing in the harbor.

A district of high fences dotted by pines, palms and the occasional tangerine tree, the place where M83 makes his music

seems stuck in the shadows. When I reach his mom's modest home, he greets me at the gate decked out in an "I Love New York" shirt, crisp jeans, and white sneakers. As we sit on the porch drinking muddy cups of coffee, he explains to me that he can't leave. He tried Paris life for a few years, found it cramped, and promptly returned home. "I'm sure you can find a better place, but this is perfect for me," says Gonzalez. "I love the light here. It puts me in a good mood to create music. I travel a lot and everywhere I go, I miss this place. I even like the smell."

His studio is in a small room in the backyard, facing the pool. Inside, vintage keyboards and drum pads huddle around a pair of computer monitors. On the ceiling, above a mattress in the corner, is a grid of glow-in-the-dark plastic stars. This room has always been a great escape. Before it was rebuilt in 2002, it was a garage where a teenaged Gonzalez and former M83 member Nicholas Fromageau would practice with their noisy rock band My Violent Wish. The band "pretended to be a bit rebel," deadpans Gonzalez, who is quick to be self-deprecating, and laughs easily.

LIVING ON VIDEO

Gonzalez and Fromageau didn't like each other at first. Impressions on the first day of high school at Lycée Jacques Audibert, a concrete slab of a building named after a French writer and poet, were blasé at best. That changed when bands like Sonic Youth and Blonde Redhead came up in conversation—the two became fast friends and eventually started making music together.

When Gonzalez talks about

"MY TEENAGE YEARS WERE A MIX OF THE MOVIES NOWHERE AND *DAZED AND CONFUSED*,"

his school days, he becomes animated, able to channel his high school experience with a single-minded clarity. The worst parts were math classes, hippies, and Elodie François, the best pupil in the class, who "was also ugly and mean." The best parts were smoking joints before Spanish class, skating to school, screwing up chemistry experiments, and making Elodie François cry. Weekends were spent with friends strumming guitars and doing drugs in secluded spots in the Alpine foothills, chilling on secret beaches on the coast, partying and drinking cheap wine, and picking up cute international tourists visiting the French Riviera. On Friday nights, they'd get high in Nicholas' older brother's room, and watch his movies. Yann, who is a director and former film critic, was often gone and had a good collection to delve into, leading to Gonzalez's fascination with Truffaut, Wenders, Lynch, and Van Sant.

"What's important in my projects is the connection with movies," says Gonzalez. "It's a real influence, maybe more than music. *Before the Dawn Heals Us* was like a soundtrack, a movie in itself. There was an intro and huge, cathartic moments. I think that the new [album] is more like a collection of songs taken from different kinds of movies."

The soundtrack comparison is even more apt for the new album, which takes a decidedly warmer, more ethereal and pop-oriented approach than the colder, denser *Dead Cities*. The monologues or snippets of conversation on his albums aren't samples, just original dialogue (sometimes written with his brother), meant to heighten the dramatic (or often melodramatic) mood and further the "scene." Gonzalez usually composes with certain visions in his head. The new track "Kim & Jessie" originated from thoughts of two teenage girls lost in the forest, getting high. "Graveyard Girl," a cascade of ecstatic synths with overwrought teen goth vocals from The Romanovs' Morgan Kibby, came from visions of Molly Ringwald dressed in black.

DREAM ON

While the thought of an album adorned with Brat Pack iconography may seem a bit tired, Gonzalez pointedly avoids making music that is simply retro. "I can definitely understand why people think '80s music is really cheap," Gonzalez says. "But I really love it. I take it seriously. I still cry when I listen to '80s music. That's why I wanted this to be a personal album, not an '80s tribute—lots of bands already did that, so it would be useless to do it

again."

Gonzalez is very personal and possessive about his music—traits that led to Fromageau leaving M83—but *Saturdays=Youth* marks the first time Gonzalez has worked with outside producers. Ewan Pearson was enlisted to give the music a contemporary gloss while Ken Thomas' experience recording bands like The Cocteau Twins helped him capture certain electronic sounds. The result is a record that can be excessive and occasionally formulaic in its emotional highs and lows, but also grandiose and gorgeous... not unlike adolescence.

Zippering around Antibes in his grandfather's car, tracing back across coastal roads and the narrow cobblestone streets he's seen all his life, Gonzalez himself is an almost perfect picture of the sort of nostalgic bliss that *Saturdays=Youth* embodies. Hair blowing in the wind, I ask if he fit into a certain clique in high school, if he perhaps resembled one of the characters in *The Breakfast Club*. Gonzalez pauses for a second, searching for words. "I don't think I was a bad guy," he muses. "I was a bit of a dreamer, you know?"

M83's *Saturdays=Youth* is out April 15 on Mute. Iloves83.com, mute.com

Moving Pictures

M83's Anthony Gonzalez lists his favorite movie moments.

Nowhere

This is my favorite Gregg Araki movie. It's a true alien in the world of cinema. What really fascinates me is this world going adrift, in which the kids seem to feel totally lost and hopeless. The final scene between Dark and Montgomery is my favorite—it's as moving as it is puzzling.

Favorite track: "Avalyn II" by Slowdive

Pretty in Pink

I think it's one of the best teen movies from the '80s, maybe my favorite. What I find interesting with this movie is that it manages to avoid all the silly cheesiness that is so common in other films from that same period. Molly Ringwald is just wonderful in it. She was one of John Hughes' muses, and it's not hard to see why. That was just before she came to live in France, I reckon...

Favorite track: "Elegia" by New Order

Aguirre, der Zorn Gottes

My favorite film by Werner Herzog: a small raft drifting away in the midst of a sweltering jungle, and a soundtrack made by Popol Vuh and Klaus Kinski that is just terrifying. The final scene, in which the monkeys get on top of the raft and all the passengers get killed by invisible enemies, was one of my first cinematographic shocks.

Favorite track: "Aguirre 1 (L'acrice di rei)" by Popol Vuh

Le Berceau de Cristal

Philippe Garrel's trilogy—*La Cicatrice intérieure*, *Athanor*, and *Le Berceau de Cristal*—owes a lot to his relationship with Nico, who was the muse of the Velvet Underground. The film focuses on depicting evanescent bodies and doesn't leave much room for dialogue. The soundtrack was made by Ash Ra Tempel and embodies everything I like in music: LSD and pads of synths.

Favorite track: Hard to say. This was my first encounter with German Krautrock of the '70s.

Lost Highway

To me, this is one of David Lynch's most fascinating movies. The whole way through, it makes you feel just as lost as the characters and you never know where the film is going to lead you. The atmosphere is really tense—often scary, totally strange, but also moving at times. I listened to that soundtrack a lot when I was around 16. This is also for me a means to do justice to Angelo Badalamenti, a composer that I deeply respect.

Favorite track: "Eye" by Smashing Pumpkins

OMG!

OMG!

XLR8R.COM
IS ALL NEW!
And still runnin' tings.

FRESH!

Better Interface and
a Brand New Look

Weekly Episodes
of XLR8R TV

Daily MP3 Downloads

Photo and Music Video Blogs

CLASSIC!

Daily Features and
a Full Back-Issue Archive

Original Wallpapers,
Interview Outtakes,
and Photo Extras
From the Pages of XLR8R


Free PDFs of Every
Issue of XLR8R

Events and Contests

Up-to-the-Minute
Music Reviews

Exclusive DJ Mix
Podcasts on Demand

The Latest in Music, Art, Fashion,
and Technology News



CULT OF
PERSON-
ALITY

WORDS: JOE COLLY PHOTOS: PAUL O'VALLE



JAMIE LIDELL COMPLETES HIS
METAMORPHOSIS FROM TECHNO TINKERER
TO FULL-ON SOUL MAN. BUT
IS HE READY FOR THE MAINSTREAM?



"HE SAID I WAS IN A GRAY AREA BETWEEN POP
AND 'SOMETHING ELSE,'

I SAID, 'YES, EXACTLY WHERE I WANT TO BE.'"

Looking rather fidgety, Jamie Lidell sits in the swank lobby of New York's Soho Grand Hotel, sipping coffee and furiously emailing on his laptop. He still has a few months before *Jim*—his third solo album and follow-up to 2005's crossover success, *Multiply*—hits stores, but he's already consumed with the work that accompanies an eagerly anticipated release.

"I haven't got time!" he exclaims. "I have four days now to practice with the band. We have to audition, rehearse, teach them the parts—always, time's running out. I'm doing videos, this press stuff, the artwork's not sorted. I'm not used to it."

It seems Lidell's going to have to adjust to the frantic pace. The well-received *Multiply*—an accomplished album boosted by a spectacular live performance—quickly transformed him from a semi-obscure avant-garde knob twiddler to an unconventional R&B singer, whose songs have appeared on *Grey's Anatomy* and in Target

advertisements. Making matters worse for his schedule, his new album is even better (and even more accessible) than his last.

SOUL REBEL

To examine Lidell as an artist—and to help explain his stylistic jump from IDM to 21st-century soul—is to study a musician with distinct periods of genre fixation. Throughout his life, he has always indulged musical obsessions; when one took hold, "everything else was out the window," he says. As an adolescent, it was (perhaps unsurprisingly) Prince, and then he became

taken by jazz. Soaking up Miles and Coltrane, "the standard stuff but the *fucking shit* as well," Lidell discovered a musical constant he could always rely on. Next came Marvin, Sly Stone, and Funkadelic before he fell head over heels for techno. "I guess it was rave culture," he explains. "I just got fully into, like, hardcore banging shit." That addiction would lead to his first recordings and collaboration with Cristian Vogel as Super_Collider. Observing each of these phases of influence helps put into focus the soulful, kaleidoscopic *Multiply* and its natural extension, *Jim*.

Multiply, more than anything, revealed Lidell's unique voice—his gift for uncanny

impersonations of Stevie, Marvin, and Otis—and a knack for solidly constructed R&B tunes infused with synthetic elements. Before the record was released, not everyone was convinced a mixture of glitch and Motown would sell. "Steve [Beckett] from Warp [Lidell's label] was confused. He said I was in a gray area between pop and 'something else.' I said, 'Yes, exactly where I want to be,'" recalls Lidell. "They thought maybe it wasn't going to work, but it did work."

The gamble having paid off, he now had the freedom to open up further on *Jim*, an even more tightly focused record and, intriguingly, one almost completely devoid of electronics.

"I guess I was sort of continuing on this record where I left off with *Multiply*," says Lidell. On the previous album, where tracks like "Newme" and "You Got Me Up" filtered Motown through modern electro, the songs on *Jim* strip away any superfluous components. At the songs' core is a pure, melodic structure that feels like it was transplanted from the Stax back-catalog directly into the present. "My objective on this record was just to make 10 songs I could live with and nothing more," he says modestly.

MOCK PERFECTION

To create *Jim*, Lidell says he adopted a simple new approach to writing. "I'd record

"THEY COULD EASILY TRY TO MARKET ME AS THE NEXT AMY WINEHOUSE."



everything as really basic sketches on a Dictaphone—old-school style—to see first if it held water as a song. I'd say, 'Could a guy, like, play that on a guitar in the street and you'd think, 'Hey, nice song.' I put that as a working manifesto and stuck to it," he explains. Discarding tunes that didn't meet this criteria, Lidell would go on to construct tracks like the joyful album opener "Another Day" and "All I Wanna Do," a gentle ballad featuring only spare acoustics and his inimitable vocals. But the album's careful production isn't all Lidell—much of it is owed to longtime collaborator and *Jim* co-producer Mocky.

"Mocky helped me decide about anything from instrumentation, the kind of configuration of sounds in an arrangement to the tempo of the piece," says Lidell. "Everything, we sort of had a head-to-head about."

Mocky, whose real name is Dominic Salole, is a Canadian jazz and hip-hop artist with a talent for coaxing great material out of friends like Peaches and Feist. He co-produced Feist's smash hit *The Reminder*, and brings an invaluable sense of musicianship to the recording process. "A guy like Mocky is much more versed in the jazz tradition. He knows how to hold it down on the piano. That's very helpful for me, because I can hear music very clearly but I'm not, like, a musician

in the traditional sense," says Lidell. The asymmetry between Mocky and Lidell also aided in the aesthetic sculpting of the record. "It's pointless to work with someone that is just like you. The fact that we work as a complimentary/antagonistic pair—triceps/biceps, I guess you could call it—helps to lift the music," explains Lidell.

Equally crucial to the recording of *Jim* was pianist Gonzales (a.k.a. Jason Beck), part of same the "Canadian contingent" as Mocky, Peaches, and Feist. He also contributed to the latter's *The Reminder* and supplies similarly expert musicianship. "We always rely on his knowledge of arrangements," says Lidell. "He's a genius, a fucking genius. Easily the best keyboard player I've ever known." Also useful was his unusual grasp of popular song. "Gonzo's musical memory is just fucking insane. Literally, I doubt you could name a song from the '80s on that he couldn't play without hesitation. It's frightening," gushes Lidell. With Mocky and Gonzales on board, Lidell had a "dream team" in place, and *Jim* triumphs as a result of the group's collaborative effort.

ROAD SCHOLARS

Transferring *Jim*'s organic energy to the stage will be a different challenge for Lidell. While touring for *Multiply*, he executed frenetic one-man shows where he looped, tweaked, and spliced his material, singing and beatboxing atop off-the-cuff remixes. For *Jim*, he's hoping to apply similar improvisational techniques to a live band. Lidell has assembled a "crazy drummer, a saxophonist," and Taylor Savvy, a third Canadian multi-instrumentalist, to round out his onstage crew. "[Savvy is] a nasty motherfucker. He doesn't want to conform, which I love. He's always finding an edge that keeps it rock and roll," says Lidell. "I haven't gone for a safe, clean band. I've gone for quite a nasty band." And that might present its own problem: "Keeping them in order to roll out regular versions of tracks for TV and those cunts is going to be a little tricky," he laughs.

Looking ahead at the hectic months following *Jim*'s release, Lidell remains excited about the album but nervous about the broadened profile it might trigger. "I'm a bit scared about the way the label thinks they should push me," he admits. "I guess that's why it's important for me to make sure the live show maintains grittiness. I've tried to keep my punk alive and not become John Legend. All due respect to Mr. Legend."

So how does he feel about the prospect of being aggressively promoted? "It's a bit shit," he says. "They could easily try to market me as the male version of Amy Winehouse. Although they couldn't because I don't have any habits to get tabloid attention. Who knows, maybe all this shit will drive me to it."

Jamie Lidell's *Jim* is released on April 29 on Warp.
jamielidell.com, warprecords.com

Three At Last

Mocky and Gonzales discuss *Jim*'s sweet synthesis.

MOCKY:

"Jamie and I are like the perfect yin and yang," says Mocky. "We both have areas of expertise that overlap but we are both very intuitive. I would say Jamie tends to think of music as sounds and I think more in terms of songs." Gonzales, he says, helps to keep the duo grounded. "Gonzales is a very old-school cat in a lot of ways. He brings the next level to the arranging of a tune once we've tracked a song. He's got a great eye for detail and a steady hand when Jamie and I are getting too crazy." But when it comes to producing other artists, he prefers to

stay close to his pals, with some possible exceptions. "I love working with real artists and friends, but I'd love to do Lil' Wayne's jazz album. The best would be if our whole crew got together and did a 'supergroup' project, though." He's just put the finishing touches on his as-yet-untitled record, the follow-up to 2006's *Navy Brown Blues*, and says of it, "It's almost all instrumental and acoustic. I think it's the album a lot of people have been waiting for from me."

GONZALES:

When the three worked on *Jim*, "I was the piano man, more or less," explains Gonzales. "I basically just try to be a third balancing wheel on the Jamie-Mocky tricycle. But Jamie's a little more sound-and-song-oriented than I am. I tend to approach songs from a Tin Pan Alley perspective. Jamie might drop a tin pan in an alley and use that to write a song." He's also the arithmetical component in the trio. "To create complex emotions in music takes good instincts and correct mathematics. I suppose Jamie's instinctive musicality becomes more effective

when multiplied by age-old harmonic techniques, but he hears it all anyway," says Gonzales. Is he surprised by the mainstream success of some of his contemporaries like Feist? "The only thing that surprises is the lack of mainstream success of my own albums. One can only hope to see into that murky crystal ball," he jokes. And what of his own upcoming record, *Soft Power*? "I can't pretend to be an outsider anymore, being a Grammy-nominated producer and all. So this is the album an insider is supposed to make, as painful as that transition was for me. It's my Billy Joel album," he offers.



MORE THAN POUNCE

AFTER YEARS AS THE MUCH ADORED NE'ER-DO-WELL OF INDIE RAP,
MINNEAPOLIS RHYMESAYER **SLUG** DISCOVERS A NEW BRAND OF STORYTELLING.

Throughout the late '90s and into 2000, Sean Daley, the 35-year-old rapper known as Slug, helped define backpack rap as half of the group Atmosphere.

His autobiographical, heart-on-sleeve storytelling, which ran over producer Anthony "Ant" Davis' clear-cut, sample-based hip-hop loops, became a hallmark of a genre that defied mainstream hip-hop's hoes 'n' hustlers mentality.

Daley wrote about his fringe tastes and fetishes, like his adoration of punk rock girls. He expressed insecurities about his personal appearance and admitted weakness in his social skills. He vented his most intimate frustrations with his romantic life and his relationship with his alcoholic father in extreme detail. In doing so, he drew a fan base of like-minded interlopers on the fringes of popular culture, who related to his persona as much as they did the style and sound of his music. Backpack rap became a culture of identity politics, one that revered its unlikely heroes. To use Daley's own metaphor, it celebrated the court jesters, the sad clowns.

Daley was 27 when, by his own admission, the first Atmosphere album "anyone paid

any attention to" was released, though his audience, then and now, is largely made up of people on the younger end of the 18- to 24-year-old demographic. That album, *Lucy Ford*, compiled new and old material—stuff previously released on tape, vinyl, and some humbly distributed CDs—and reached record stores in 1999. According to my best estimate, that was the beginning of backpack rap's peak era, which lasted until about 2003—the same year Atmosphere's third major release, *Seven's Travels*, came out. By that time, Daley was entrenched in a culture he'd helped build. He was drinking too much, touring 200 days out of the year, and having sex with fans—all of which he documented in Atmosphere lyrics.

"There's a joke Ant will say," Daley says of his producer and decade-long friend. "If it ain't a true story, then it will be. If it isn't something Sean actually went through, give him a year and he'll find a way to

"I DON'T KNOW IF
IT'S DARK
BUT IT'S DEFINITELY
COLD.

IN THAT WAY,
IT REPRESENTS
WHERE THE FUCK
WE LIVE."

—SLUG



go through it." Daley has made a career of airing his personal failures, positioning himself as the butt of many jokes and masking his chagrin with sarcasm. Now he's ready to try something new.

BORN TO RUN

It's a frigid, blustery day in South Central Minneapolis, and I am parked outside the house where Daley lived as a youth. Daley is in the driver's seat, idling the car and chain-smoking cigarettes out its cracked window. He is hung over, only passably kempt, and he amicably warns that he will soon start smoking weed.

Though we've parked to look at this house, the house isn't much to look at. It is a compact, cottage-style residence, painted white with black wooden shutters. This is the home his mother, a factory-line inspector at Honeywell, bought after leaving his father, a hobbyist bass player and assembly worker at General Motors, and moved her three adolescent boys into. Daley's youngest brother, 27, owns the house, though he is not here now. It's only seven blocks from the building the

family first lived in. We drive there next, but pause only briefly in front of the salmon-pink duplex on a street lined by other split-level homes and apartment buildings. Snow embankments line the curbs. It's February—deep winter by Minnesotan standards—and the streets are barren. "The snow kind of tempers it all," says Daley. "Kind of like, 'I'm not going outside to fight today.' But when the summer comes, everyone gets shot."

Ant's home lies just up the street in this working-class neighborhood, split racially in a way that reflects the duo's own mixed heritages: white, black, and American Indian. Many of the instabilities endemic to working-class family life were present in Daley's own home: domestic abuse, alcoholism, divorce, and parental absence. When he entered his 20s, he transmuted those themes into his own relationship dramas. And, as Daley began recounting his memories against the backdrop of a musician's lifestyle—with all its dive bars, late nights in dingy punk venues, and free drinks—they started to sound tragically romantic. He invented the character of Lucy Ford, a modern, feminine Lucifer, to serve as metaphor for his inner mental

struggles. At times he cast her as the object of his romantic affections. In the song "Fuck You Lucy," she represented his developing dependence on alcohol and substances.

"I wouldn't call my mom a feminist, although she went through her phases of politicizing herself as one," says Daley. "When her and my dad finally split she did a really great job of not making us hate men, but she did her best to try to instill some feminist beliefs in us. So when I did get my phase of trying to figure myself out, there was a lot of tug-of-war inside of me between wanting to hate a particular woman and then feeling guilty about that. And there's certain songs that I won't perform anymore, because the game of tug-of-war is over and I know where I'm at."

Where he's at now—perhaps to the surprise of many a groupie—is in a long-term, monogamous relationship, which he talks about happily. His girlfriend of five years (though they were off-and-on for a large chunk of that time) lives with him in his new home, a spacious, impeccably decorated three-floor house, still on the South side of Minneapolis.

"Everybody's right," he says. "I became a caricature of the guy in those records. Writing songs about my issues

manifested me to stay stuck in them. Especially when I started to deal with people who didn't know me but only knew the personality on the record—those are the people who expected me to get wasted with them and end up trying to fuck them in their room. I made the mistake of attempting to live up to that. It opened a safety net for me to just go ahead and be an idiot. So I don't know that writing anything helped me work through issues. If anything, I think it was kind of a mistake. It ended up putting me in a five-year space of using it to justify my co-dependencies or my methods of self-medicating. People expected that from Sean, so Sean did that. It took a lot for me to wake up [and realize I'm] not who I was when I was 12."

DARKNESS ON THE EDGE OF TOWN

Before making Atmosphere's fourth widespread release, *You Can't Imagine How Much Fun We're Having*, in 2005, Daley decided to sober up. He went six months without drinking. Halfway through that period, he acquired alopecia as a side effect of an advanced tooth infection, which caused him to lose most of his hair. He shaved his head into a mohawk, displayed on the cover of that album; though it's since grown back, he took the simultaneous breakdown of his physical and mental health as a sign that it was time for a new approach to life, including a revamping of his creative process.

He began sitting down to write every day, finishing each song he started. Prior to that, "songs would sit around my house for months and not go anywhere," he says. More importantly, he and Davis would meet to create songs together, rather than trade beats and



"THE REASON
PEOPLE LIKE IT
IS NOT BECAUSE
IT'S GOOD,
BUT BECAUSE
THERE'S A RAWNESS
THAT REMINDS THEM
OF THEM,"
—SLUG

rhymes, then work in isolation as they had in the past. It's a method they took even further on their latest, *When Life Gives You Lemons, You Paint That Shit Gold*. For several months in 2007, Daley arrived at Davis' home around 11 a.m. most mornings, setting up camp in the basement for marathon work sessions, which sometimes lasted several days without so much as a shower.

When we arrive at Davis' house—an upper-middle-class residence only 10 minutes from Daley's place—I ask the producer, who, at 37, only recently began establishing himself as the second public face of Atmosphere, if he feels that Daley is his best friend. (Davis toured with Daley for the first time in promotion of *You Can't Imagine*... in the place of Atmosphere's longstanding tour DJ, Mr. Dibbs.) Davis pauses, and then laughs. "I don't talk like that," he says. "But I'll put it to you this way. He's more to me than that."

Though *Seven's Travels* is Atmosphere's highest selling record (over 200,000), *You Can't Imagine*... is the one Daley and Davis agree they are most proud of. Both look back on prior records with a great deal of disdain.

"A lot of kids will be like, 'Nah, *Lucy Ford*, that's the one,'" says Daley. "But if you take that album apart piece by piece, I was on some shit where I would drop my verse and go, 'That was it!' Because I thought that was the way to do it: Just capture the emotion. It doesn't matter if 'contradictive' isn't really a word. Whereas now it's like, yeah, actually it *does* matter. I get embarrassed when I say words that don't really exist on a record. I get embarrassed when I mispronounce words. We didn't think of editing. We didn't think of polishing. So the reason people like it is not because it's good, but because there's a rawness that reminds them of them. If a kid wants to make a record it

probably would sound like *Lucy Ford*. It would be a dude not knowing what he was doing."

THE RISING

When Life Gives You Lemons is a departure from past Atmosphere work, both in production and lyrical content. On *You Can't Imagine*..., the pair pushed themselves to go beyond sample- and drum-machine patterns and hired a live band to recreate Davis' beats on record and tour. This time around, they stuck with the same musicians, combining their traditional, organic instrumentation for a sound palette comprised largely of vintage analog synths. The result is something like an '80s goth interpretation of hip-hop's boom-bap. "I don't know if it's dark—I hear optimism in some of the record—but it's definitely cold," says Daley. "In that way, it represents where the fuck we live."

As a writer, Daley pushed himself in a whole new direction. Before heading to Davis' house in the mornings, he walked to a shop down the road to buy coffee, which he'd drink sitting at the bus stop out front. Buses came every half hour, but he

waved them past.

"I would just wait until I found a car at the stoplight in front of me that had a story inside of it," he says. "I'd look in the car and I'd be like, 'I wonder what their story is.' And a few hours later I'd go to Ant's house like, 'Okay, I've got this guy and this kid. And the guy is mad, and the kid is sad—won't even look at his dad, he's looking out the window. In fact, he might even notice me. But now I have to find the beat that makes me want to make up their story.' What I needed to figure out was how to tap back into eighth-grade creative-writing class and figure out how to tell stories that are not from my perspective, but still have a moral or a point to the story that's still rooted

in what I believe in."

HUMAN TOUCH

The result is a record that sees Daley recasting himself from the sad clown into a working-class hero on par with John Cougar Mellencamp or Tom Waits. In many ways, these stories are the same as the ones he told before: Their heroes are conflicted, if not tragic, with bad guys showing they're capable of doing good and good guys sometimes doing bad. Daley just isn't personally playing all the roles anymore. On "Your Glasshouse," he raps about waking up on the bathroom floor of a stranger's home, paralyzed with a hangover, though he says the situation is a metaphor for his frustrations with the war in Iraq. "In Her Music Box" is about a little girl making sense of her parents' relationship and the world from the backseat of her father's car, while absorbing a steady stream of misogynistic rap. "Guarantees" is told from the perspective of a husband and father struggling to make ends meet on a factory wage. "Dreamer" is the story of a working mother with a heart condition and a job that doesn't pay the bills. "*This is life/We all strain*," he raps. "*While we pray for dollars/We work for change/It's all the same/We all struggle*."

About the closest Daley comes to inserting himself in a song is on "Yesterday," which recounts a chance meeting with a long-estranged friend. A subtle piano-riff sample plays an easy emotional chord as Daley rhymes, "*But you knew me back when I was a younger me/You've seen Sean in all types of light/And I've been meaning to ask you if I'm doing all right yesterday*."

"How the fuck do I still get to be doing this?" says Daley as we leave Davis' house, almost as though he expects an answer out of me. "I've totally oversaturated my market. I think that it has to just be that people are not just liking me because I'm a great rapper. They hear something in me that makes them think they might get along with me if they met me."

Atmosphere's *When Life Gives You Lemons, You Paint That Shit Gold* is out April 22 on Rhymesayers. myspace.com/atmosphere, rhymesayers.com

NIGHTS

PAUL HARTNETT DOCUMENTS THREE DECADES OF DRAMA AND DECADENCE IN LONDON.

WORDS: [VIVIAN HOST](#) PHOTOS: [PAUL HARTNETT](#)



From 1976 through the present, British photographer Paul Hartnett has been consumed with documenting the moths and butterflies of London's underground clubs. What began as a way of developing a rapport with the exotic personalities of the nightlife as a teenager has now turned into a riveting document of three decades of excess, eccentricity, and, above all, cutting-edge style.

Hartnett continues to be obsessed with the new and the now, but currently splits his time between the denizens of the dark and Haworth in West Yorkshire, beloved territory of the Brontë sisters. Following the recent wrap of an exhibition of his photos, *Hartnett: '76 > Now*, at London's groundbreaking youth culture archive PYMCA, we asked Paul to talk about some of the settings and stars of his legendary snaps.

paulhartnett.com, pymca.com



1984: SCARY MONSTERS, ONE OR TWO SUPER CREEPS

Lana Pelay sits in the center, one of London's queen bees back in the '80s. Around her, the fighters and fuck-ups of '80s clubland. Princess Julia, Scarlet, Mike Nicholls. Oh, I could tell so many stories... Which one was the thief, the whore, the junkie. So many of the dancefloor crowd seemed set to self-destruct.

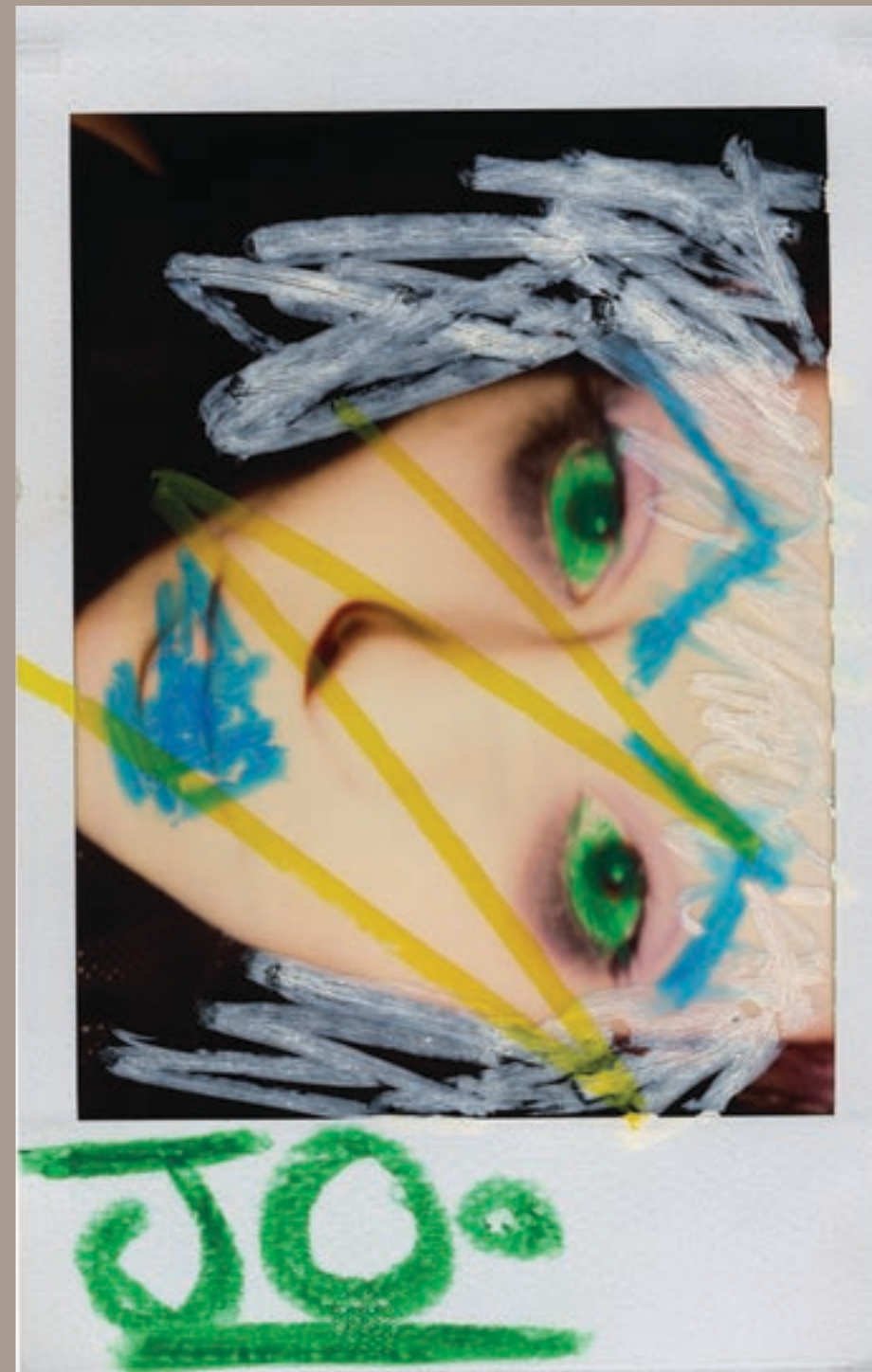


1978: MYRA AND HILDA, BILLY'S, SOHO, LONDON

Myra and Hilda were the first two women to grace the dancefloor at Steve Strange's and Rust Egan's '78 club, Billy's, where the vibe was all things Bowie, Roxy Music, and Kraftwerk. I would invariably be the first to arrive at a club, setting up my cameras (Nikon), and awaiting the beautiful butterflies and moths as they came down the stairs. I loved the theatricality of the Steve Strange clubs—it was all very playground.

1995: JO REYNOLDS, POLAROID

I have had the good fortune to photograph so many wild flowers, exotic butterflies, and moths. Jo Reynolds was the ultimate club kid back in the mid-'90s. She was the door girl at the drag king club I hosted in Leicester Square, where around 150 women would come dressed as men each Thursday night. Jo had such pale skin, the most dilated pupils. Can't imagine why... *ahem*. Jo was a star, and bands loved to have her as an atmospheric darling in their videos. She went kind of, um, you know... discovered God. Jesus. Then started making jewelry out of feathers. Lord knows what has happened to her. She probably became one of the weirdest things imaginable: quite normal.





1985: POLAROIDS OF LEIGH BOWERY

I first started taking Polaroids at the age of nine. I loved the instant quality of those tear-off strips that had to be kept warm for one full minute under my hairless boy armpit. My first subjects were my dog, cars, birds in flight. In the '80s, I was sponsored by Polaroid UK Ltd., who provided me with three fabulous cameras and a non-stop supply of film. Imagine my surprise when, at \$1 a click, a postman came knocking at my door with box after box for me to use. I was sponsored for 10 years, and [I] documented with a variety of Polaroid mediums. I loved the fact that people could personalize their images. Of course, there was a slightly ironic touch to using a Polaroid camera—my feeling was that the medium was trashy and disposable, like so many of the people. Oh, I was so cruel back in those days.

1979: THE FIST FUCK GUY, EARL'S COURT, LONDON

My first subjects were clubbers, and queers. Hard-core queers. I was an instant hit with the fist-fuck set. S&Mers loved the idea of a teenager documenting them, and they still do. I heard this guy died soon after this picture was taken, found in an appalling condition. Maybe a queer club rumor, I don't know.

 For the full interview with Paul Hartnett, visit XLR8R.com/116extras.





LOOKING FOR MAD DOWN THUMP

Photography:

Josh McNey

First Assistant:

Jason Costa

Second Assistant:

Jeremy St. Romain

Stylist:

Liz Baca/The Goods!
(gottagetthegoods.com)

Assistant Stylist:

Peter Boardman

Models:

Evan Capper (Red Model
Managment), Julia (Rocket
Garage)

Make-up:

Susie Sobol (susiesobol.com)

Hair:

Hair: Gregory Alan
(liddthehair.com)

Shot on location at
Live With Animals, Brooklyn
(livewithanimals.com)

Special thanks to Hannah at
Marmalade Vintage
(marmaladevintage.com),
Alice of Rock It Retro
(rockitretro.com), and Pixie
Market (pixiemarket.com).



Red Lil Dap hat by [Still Life](#),
applique tank top by [Official
Tourist](#), fleece blazer by
[Cassette](#), tuxedo pants by
[Diesel](#), AMQ Scythe shoes by
[Alexander McQueen for Puma](#)



Leather fedora by [Still Life](#), blazer by [Diesel](#), tank top by [Quail](#),
suspenders by [Mad Marletta](#), Siren High pants by [Hellz Bellz](#)



[Maharishi](#) x [New Era](#) baseball cap, necklace by [Chris Habana](#),
hooded cardigan by [STPL](#), white tuxedo shirt by [Diesel](#)



[New Era](#) Soul Capture D.I.Y. hat customized by [Initial_H](#), Unlimited Artist, Bow Tie necklace by [Claire Pain](#) from [PixieMarket.com](#), tank

top by [Diesel](#), rings by Lisa Levine and [VeraMeat](#), leggings by [MadeMe](#) x [Peggy Noland](#), acid wash shorts by [MadeMe](#), jeans by [Diesel](#)



Black and white cardigan by [WESC](#), gingham check shirt by [Fremont](#)



Cropped trench by [Annie Havlicek](#), jeans by [Cassette](#),
The Time Teller gold watch by [Nixon](#), vintage LED [Timex](#)
watch from [The Goods](#), green boots by [Dr. Martens](#)



Hooded sweatshirt by [Yoko Devereaux](#), Jesus Piece t-shirt by [Kilo International](#), necklace by [Office Tramp](#), fleece shorts by [Cassette](#)

I BELIEVE IN SANTO GOLD



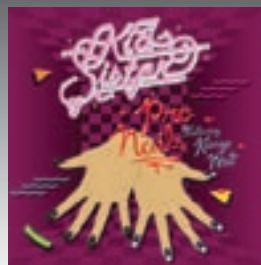
"FUTURE-POP PRINCESS..NEXT BIG THING" - SPIN

"THE FUTURE OF MUSIC, TODAY"
- ROLLING STONE 10 ARTISTS TO WATCH

AVAILABLE IN STORES 4.22.08 ON CD AND DIGITAL FORMATS



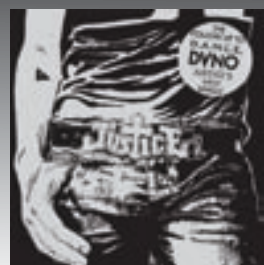
GNARLS BARKLEY
THE ODD COUPLE



KID SISTER
PRO-NAILS



SANTOGOLD
CREATOR/
L.E.S ARTISTES 12"



JUSTICE
DVNO



www.downtownmusic.com



Crystal Castles

Album
Reviews
4.08



TORONTO ELECTRO ROCKERS SPIN
BLOG HYPE INTO BIT-CRUSHED GOLD.

CRYSTAL CASTLES
CRYSTAL CASTLES
Last Gang/CAN/CD

Like She-Ra and unicorns, it's best to think of Crystal Castles as an imaginary force. While there are two presumably real people in the Toronto-based "band" (Ethan Kath produces, Alice Glass sings), almost everything about them personally—including their names, their past, and how they came to be—is fabricated. That ambiguity might be a cheap press stunt, but the alternate, optimistic read is that Kath's and Glass' personal details don't matter anyway. This isn't music made by humans, but characters—the kind found in grainy fantasy cartoons and garage-sale videogames. If you can buy into that world, this is an album that flirts with brilliance.

For anyone following Crystal Castles' blog-splattered exploits, nothing on the band's self-titled debut will be a huge shock. The majority of the tracks, notably "Untrust Us," "Good Time," and "Alice Practice," have been floating around for at least a year now, with newer material like "Through the Hosierey" and "Reckless" not exactly breaking free from the established template. That is to say, there's a very specific, simple formula at work on this record, one that—aside from the final, tacked-on shoegazer cut "Tell Me What to Swallow"—is never strayed from.

Any kid raised on '80s videogames is no doubt familiar with the sound of Crystal Castles. The kick/snare thud and crack of early industrial makes up at least 90 percent of the drum work, with the melody filled in by whirrs and beeps straight out of the underwater levels of *Super Mario Brothers*. The production is bit-crushed and pixilated, though not in a cold and murky way—the low-key "Magic Spells" is full of warm, ghostly melancholy, like the end-credit music for an imaginary Nintendo game.

Filtered through the same pixilation effects, Glass' vocals run the gamut between unintelligible textures and screamed-out chants. As catchy and strange as the beats are by themselves, it's Glass' presence that really plays up the imaginary aspect of Crystal Castles' persona: Her shifts between a voice

trapped in the game and her cartoonish, exaggerated emotion make her seem more like a walking sample than a real person.

The other strange presence on this record is the ghost of electroclash. Maybe not the coolest touchstone to throw around at this point, but it's definitely present: "Air War" has more than a passing resemblance to Adult's "Nite Life," and "Knights" could just as easily find itself next to *Kittenz and Thee Glitz*-era Felix da Housecat: A lot of that has to do with Kath's reliance on octave-jumping basslines, big synth-string choruses, and pop-music structures, which definitely isn't a bad thing. It's just funny to think of a whole new generation of kids that has never heard Fischerspooner.

By the close of the album, there's a sense that too much of a good thing ends up being pretty damn samey, but it's that narrow scope that also happens to be Crystal Castles' greatest strength. Step out of the 8-bit confines, and there'd be no illusion; the concept would come off like a gimmick. And while that may limit the scope of what the band can do in the future, maybe that's for the best. It's not like we don't keep going back to those old Nintendo games, anyway. *Brandon Ivers*



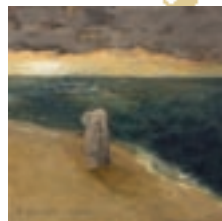
Photo by Charis Briey

Christopher Willits

WILLITS + SAKAMOTO

OCEAN FIRE 12K/US/CD

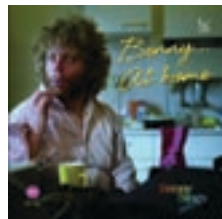
Groundbreaking guitar tweaker Christopher Willits and Japanese electronic guru Ryuichi Sakamoto are more concerned with exploring sonic textures than they are with blowing minds on their first full-length collaboration. Billed as a tribute to the beauty and fragility of the oceans, the album unfolds as a set of long tone pieces that mimic the languid, dreamlike motions of sea life bobbing in the ocean's currents. Not much happens, but like Brian Eno's *Music for Films* or Peter Gabriel's *Rabbit-Proof Fence* soundtrack, the abstract washes of sound create such a sense of movement and space that they can still be mesmerizing. Rumbling, almost sub-bass tones dominate "Sea Plains" and "Chi-Yu," while "Ocean Sky Remains" evokes something mystical with its whale-song cries and cascades of processed guitar and keyboard drone. Ultimately, despite all the technology deployed, the album feels ancient, vast, and more than a little unsettling—not unlike the depths of the ocean. *Andy Hermann*



A WEATHER COVE

Team Love/US/2CD

The debut album from this Portland-based indie-folk quintet is something of a battlefield—climbing the impossible mountain versus sleeping in a valley, lying next to a lover instead of cutting all ties, and buckling under the weight of emotional entropy rather than holding oneself together. Musically, the songs echo this tug-of-war, with lines like "The same waves that make you right will make you decay" set against haunting organs, softened drums, and minor guitar chords that spin in 10 directions at once, yet still seem understated. Perhaps the most moving element of *Cove* is the way vocalist Aaron Gerber sings about these issues in an almost monotone voice, suggesting a resignation to the struggles at hand. *Jennifer Marston*



ANGEL KALMUKIA

Editions Mego/AUS/CD

Drone-metal takes another bloody-footed hike across a paved-over desert on *Kalmukia*. This trio of expats from Pan Sonic, Schneider TM, and Lost in Hildurness crafts parched, murmuring tones that burn leisurely into one's subconscious. After a weak start of flat metal riffs on "Bones in the Sand," Angel picks up the tension in the title track, where brooding strings gradually collapse into digital debris. The group later recalls composer Krzysztof Penderecki's darkest moments on "Effect of Discovery," where siren-like wails mimic an auto-collision victim's numb shock. Sadly, *Kalmukia* ends with a joyous cliché; "Aftermath: The Mutation" ascends to St. Peter's gate with jangling, shoegazer guitar riffs. It's a moment that makes one miss the nightmares. *Cameron Macdonald*

AUTECHRE QUARISTICE

Warp/UK/CD

Light and dark, desolation and grace—Autechre's see-saw tilts steadfastly into its ninth LP manifestation. *Quaristice* convulses between minimalist mechanics and grim, subconscious melody more sporadically than ever before. The reverse tide of "WNSN" and low-frequency polar creep of "Notwo" lubricates the hyper-electro cadence of tracks like "chenc9" and "bnc Castl," accentuating the disintegrated nature of the album. Whereas early works like *Amber* and *LP5* explored the fusion of fluid and mechanical textures in a cybernetic form, *Quaristice* seems to break that formula down and explore the components in a more vacuum-like environment. However, hybrid organisms that do emerge, like the humming, titanic "Tankakern," move with a dark and deliberate gait, bound for many a rewind. *Doug Morton*

BENNY SINGS

BENNY... AT HOME

Sonar Kollektiv/GER/CD

Tim "Benny Sings" van Berkestijn is a Dutchman who might envision himself as the Netherlands' next-gen Stevie Wonder, albeit for the commercial age. Imagine a bouncier, more pop-directed take on distinctly '80s throwback R&B, with less soul and a jingle-like catchiness, and you've pretty much got it. Tracks like "Blackberry Street" could be the backdrop for a toothpaste ad, but pieces like "Let Me In" and "We'll Make Lovesongs" showcase Berkestijn's ability to morph something sentimental and fluffy into curiously lovely songs. Plus, you just gotta love a Dutch dude who belts out stuff like "you're outta sight." *Janet Tzou*

CHRISTOPHER BISSONNETTE IN BETWEEN WORDS

Kranky/US/CD

Now that we're 40 years past LaMonte Young, 30 past Brian Eno, and more than 10 past Christian Fennesz, it's hard to imagine what's left to do in the world of ambient. And yet Christopher Bissonnette's second CD touches the soul and tugs at the heartstrings in ways that are both familiar and different than his first records. Tracks like "Provenance" and "The Colonnade" sound wrapped in gauze while the muffled bells on "Tempest" border on sinister and somehow manage to be sublime. The whole thing cries out for your attention in a way that ambient isn't supposed to—making this a more challenging and wonderful album because of it. *Matt Earp*

CIRKUS

LAYLOWER

Tent/GER/CD

Stockholm's Cirkus are genre-bender Neneh Cherry's latest inspired vessel. While Cherry's passionate singing/rapping steals the spotlight, her talented cohorts are no slouches—acoustic guitar, turntablism, and teenager Lolita Moon's rich vocals add color and depth to *Laylower's* electronic singer-songwriter blend. Massive Attack, Groove Armada, and Psychonauts paved the way for Cirkus' pop-dance hybrids, but like kindred spirit Me'Shell Ndegeocello, Cherry's vocal delivery and provocative lyrics demand the listener's attention. Wallpaper music this ain't. Songs like "You're Such An..." are as arresting as they are catchy. Still, you'll have to skip over a few duds on *Laylower* to find the real gems as Cirkus negotiates its own stylistic high-wire act. *Tomas Palermo*

CARL CRAIG

CARL CRAIG SESSIONS

IK7/GER/2CD

Since taking a bit of a break from his Planet E label in 2006, Detroit techno production and remixing giant Carl Craig has returned to the fold, offering some solid creative output. *Sessions* is two mixed CDs' worth of vintage and new C2, spanning time, space, and a more than a few aliases with dark textures, deep layers, and bumpin' grooves across genres. From his Innerzone Orchestra alias' timeless "Bug In the Bass Bin" to his recent Grammy-nominated re-rub of Junior Boys' "Like A Child," Craig shows no sign of stopping, and continues to move stealthily past many of his techno brethren stuck back in the '90s. *Velanche*

DJ DONNA SUMMER

PANTHER TRACKS

Cock Rock Disco/GER/CD

Wonderfully calculated to piss off your loved ones, neighbors, and pets, *Panther Tracks* bangs like few things I've heard this year. Yes, DJ Donna Summer (a.k.a. Jason Forrest) has gone back to breakbeat hardcore, splitting from the tame, calculated IDM/techno/"other" he released with *Shamelessly Exciting*. What kind of crack fiend can dance to this for longer than one track is a mystery—"Get Down" is well above 150 bpm, and most others follow suit. "Rock Rock Rock" is a gem, though, exploding from a nice-enough maximal rhythm into sample-splattered beats that feel like listening to a day's worth of radio compacted into less than an hour. Actually, so does most of the album. *Michael Byrne*

CRYSTAL CASTLES

Album available now



"One of the hottest bands around..." - NME

"One of the best things to come out of Canada since Arcade Fire." - BBC

myspace.com/crystalcastles

BOYS NOIZE



oioioi AVAILABLE NOW



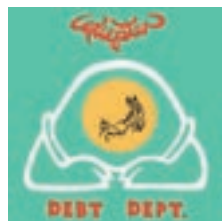
oioioi REMIXED AVAILABLE NOW

"Feadz mix is so good it pisses me off" - TIGA

"Boys Noize makes the words "German", "Techno" and "DJ" sound cool again." - JUSTICE

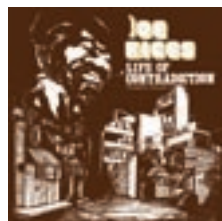
myspace.com/boysnoizemusic





EXCEPTER
DEBT DEPT
Paw Tracks/US/CD

The fourth record (and Paw Tracks debut) from Brooklyn's Excepter is by far the creepiest offering from the experimental performance troupe, and finds the six-piece conditioning its decayed jams of electronic scree and industrial hiss into a scary, yet sexy-sounding beast. Abundant in nihilistic/surrealistic overtones all at once, tracks like "Burgers" and "Any and Every" insert dub and pop sensibilities into the mix, usually centered on a programmed, Whitehouse-style groove mashed with dilating synth bass and choppy beats. Ditto for "Kill People," a bone-chilling romp of shouting, echoing vocals and pulsating clatter that sounds like an out-pop dance hit from the darkest corner of the universe. *Chris Sabbath*



DENNIS FERRER
MY WORLD AS THEY REMIXED IT
King Street/US/CD

Close your eyes: What names might appear on the reworkings of deep-house stalwart Dennis Ferrer's album, *The World as I See It*? Sure, nothing's *wrong* with getting Joe Claussell and Sunshine Jones on this—hell, Jones' "Transitions" is one of *My World's* finest tracks. But it's not just that there are few surprises here; there are few moments when anything seems to happen at all. Milanese duo Dolls Combers' electro take on "I Can't Imagine" has dancer's legs, and the gospel-tinged "Church Lady (MF Remix)" jumps out. But mostly, this neither subtracts from nor adds to Ferrer's legacy. *Justin Hopper*



FINK
DISTANCE AND TIME
Ninja Tune/UK/CD

I've gotta hand it to Fin "Fink" Greenall for bravely sticking to his acoustic guitar and husky tenor instead of reverting back to his sampler, no matter what his fans wish. But he's still not a nimble lyricist, and he tends to indulge hopelessly romantic clichés where he either writes valentines or Dear John notes to poor lasses. Greenall is cute at best—he sings about missing blueberry pancakes and drops lyrics like "I used to live on Cloud 9/Now I moved to 8" amid decent, inoffensive melodies and wallflower beats. I can't help but feel nostalgic for his old, drawn-in-crayon trip-hop days. *Cameron Macdonald*

JOE HIGGS
LIFE OF CONTRADICTION
Pressure Sounds/UK/CD

Dubbed the Father of Reggae by Jimmy Cliff, Joe Higgs had a profound influence on artists like Bob Marley and The Wailers, whom he mentored in Kingston. He even wrote Peter Tosh's seminal "Steppin' Razor." His 1975 debut album is one of those lost classics that somehow eluded mass acclaim, but hopefully this reissue will change that. Included here are remakes of hits Higgs recorded in the early '60s, like "Come on Home" as well as "Life of Contradiction," which sounds as fresh today as it did when it was originally recorded in 1972. Higgs passed away in 1999, but his spirit lives on in his beautiful melodies and hopeful messages captured best here on his signature song "There's a Reward." *James Mayo*

KELLEY POLAR
I NEED YOU TO HOLD ON WHILE THE SKY IS FALLING
Environ/US/CD

With his second album, Mike Kelley (a.k.a. Kelley Polar) has entered into a small pantheon of electro-pop conceptualists inhabited by the likes of Matthew Herbert and labelmates Metro Area. *I Need You to Hold On While the Sky Is Falling* buttresses moments of dance-floor purity like "Entropy Reigns" (à la Depeche Mode) with the likes of "A Dream in Three Parts," based on melodies composed by Romanian romanticist George Enesco (which winds up sounding a bit like The Communards). This is pop that borrows from Philip Glass while retaining an electro-egalitarianism: Is it always successful? No. Is it always beautifully, courageously ambitious? Hell, yeah. *Justin Hopper*

ERIC LAU
NEW TERRITORIES
Ubiquity/US/CD

All the tags for the music that Londoner Eric Lau makes sound contrived: future funk, nu-soul, beat-head jazz—none of these really captures Lau's confident, cool essence. Sure, artists like Jay Dee, Waaheed, and SA-RA are Lau's creative cousins, but the 26-year-old beatmaker blazes his own trails via rich, song-based vocal numbers and sweet, spacious instrumentals. *New Territories* bubbles with optimism, illustrated on "Time Will Tell," which is buoyed by Bobbi Humphrey-style flute licks and singer Sariah Leah's hopeful messages. Lau has produced beats for Lupe Fiasco, Georgia Anne Muldrow, and Wildchild, but refreshingly it's U.K. locals Tawiah, Rahel, and Sariah whose vocals light up his crisp, no-nonsense soul beats. *Tomas Palermo*

JAMIE LIDELL
JIM
Warp/US/CD

It was moving, but the music on Jamie Lidell's *Multiply* was mostly a platform for his oversized voice and charisma. Who else can make wearing suits lined with mirrors—a human disco ball—look not only effortless but somehow appropriate? He flexes his irrefutable voice and charm on *Jim*, but it's the contributions of collaborators like Gonzales and Mocky that really stretch things out, generating a warmer, funkier, and more eclectic backdrop that Lidell swings over with style. The positively sunny "Another Day," with chirping birds and schmaltzy strings, begins a streak of loose jams, including disco vamps and upbeat, Stevie-style soul. *Patrick Sisson*

LUCIANO
JAH IS MY NAVIGATOR
VP/US/CD

Roots singer Luciano has been plenty creative since 1995, releasing over 40 albums. Granted, there's been plenty of generic material, and *Jah Is My Navigator* mixes worthwhile with mundane. Slightly overproduced and predictable, the man's voice still carries plenty of weight, especially when things are mellow, as on the soft, R&B-inflected "Paradise Liberty." (If the voice sounds familiar on the Peter Tosh cover, "I'm the Tuffest," it should—it belongs to the Rastaman's son, Andrew.) Songs like "African Liberty" and "Wise Up Youth" are exactly the anthem-like cries you'd expect, making them slightly irrelevant. But when Luciano turns everything low, save for piano, violin, and voice, "Jah Canopy/Hard Herbs" is the kind of song that lasts for generations. *Derek Beres*



Fuck Buttons

FUCK BUTTONS
STREET HORRRSING
ATP/UK/CD

Bristol duo Fuck Buttons have created a huge buzz—and not just in the blogosphere. Their debut album, *Street Horrsing*, is dominated by a truculent, enveloping buzz, possibly from a Roland 303 or a homemade generator of low-end madness, beneath which heroic melodies struggle for audibility. "Sweet Love for Planet Earth" opens with sprightly music-box tinkles, but they're quickly overrun by gnarly, fuzz-toned synths and haloed by angelic keyboard drones. Here and elsewhere on *Horrsing*, faint yet feral caterwauling, like Trent Reznor on helium, animates the background. But ultimately it's just another texture in a tsunami of tense oscillations and Brontosaurus-colonic tones. To keep stasis at bay, sporadic fits of tribal drumming (recalling Cro-Magnon) and 4/4 kicks puncture the barbed din. Fuck Buttons follow Throbbing Gristle's lead on "Discipline," and their buzz-laden bombs are more powerful for it. *Dave Segal*

A Sustainable Camping Festival Celebrating Music, Art and Action



Dave Matthews Band * Widespread Panic
John Mayer * 311 * Phil Lesh and Friends

Primus * Thievery Corporation * Snoop Dogg
Modest Mouse * Michael Franti & Spearhead * Gov't Mule
STS9 * Colbie Caillat * Slightly Stoopid * The Black Keys
Yonder Mountain String Band featuring Jon Fishman
Keller Williams & The WMD'S * Gogol Bordello * Citizen Cope
The Disco Biscuits * Medeski Martin & Wood * Ray LaMontagne
Derek Trucks & Susan Tedeschi Soul Stew Revival * Drive-By Truckers * Of Montreal * Etown Radio Show
The Dresden Dolls * Gomez * Brett Dennen * Taj Mahal * Mike Gordon * Zappa Plays Zappa
Crystal Method DJ Set * JJ Grey & MOFRO * The Greyboy Allstars * The Secret Machines
Railroad Earth * Beth Orton * Jakob Dylan & The Green Mountain Rebels * A3 * Bettye Lavette
Emmitt Nershi Band * Lotus * EOTO * Panjea with Michael Kang * Yard Dogs Road Show
State Radio * The Beautiful Girls * Sage Francis * Tea Leaf Green * Bassnectar
Pnuma Trio * Diplo * Flosstradamus * The Juan MacLean * The Dynamites feat. Charles Walker
DJ Rekha * Dead Confederate * Motion Potion * DJ Rootz * SOJORN * Busdriver

On-Site
Lodging Packages
Available!

July 3 - 6, 2008

Double JJ Ranch - Rothbury, Michigan USA

Tickets On Sale Now
at www.rothburyfestival.com

NO MAN IS AN ISLAND
JOIN OUR COMMUNITY
ROTHBURY THINK TANK:
ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND
ALTERNATIVE CLEAN ENERGY
Featuring Dr. Eben Goodwin, L. Hunter Lovins,
Dr. Stephen H. Schneider and Winona LaDuke,
with many, many others.

WWW.ROTHBURYFESTIVAL.COM

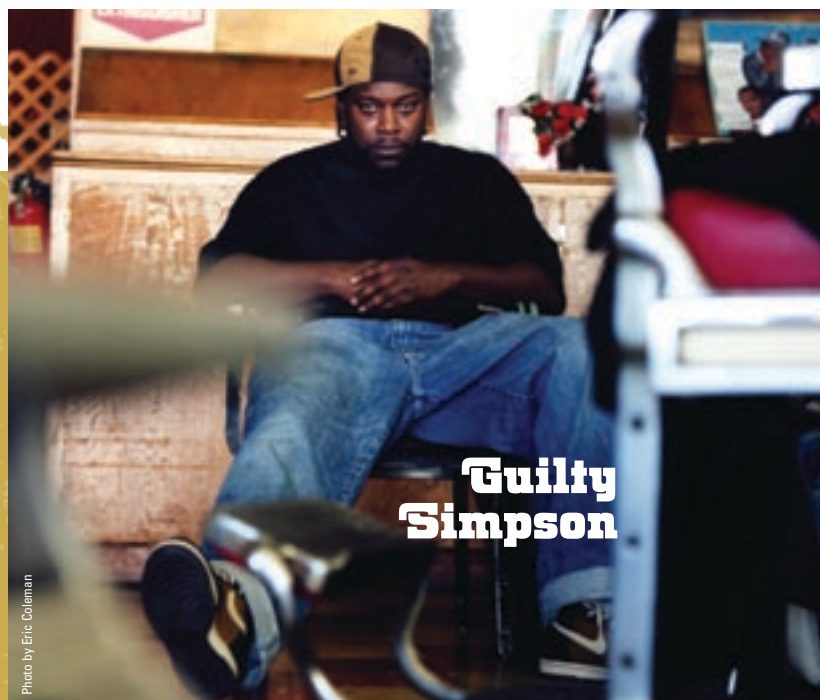


Photo by Eric Coleman

GUILTY SIMPSON
ODE TO THE GHETTO
Stones Throw/US/CD

Guilty Simpson—like Phat Kat and other venerable Detroit MCs—hasn't received much love from the industry until recently. But a little late support is better than none, as Guilty uses his Stones Throw debut to showcase his slow, well-pronounced flow and telling, thug-leaning raps. Even though this MC's delivery isn't all that hard-hitting, his words stick with you. Without glorifying the crime life, Guilty tells it like it is with lines like, "I don't recommend it/But I choose to pack guns" (from the Madlib-produced banger "The Future"). Guilty isn't all about the glocks and stick-ups, though. In fact, the realm of relationship rhymes is visited on occasion ("I Must Love You") with surprisingly forthrightness. But regardless of the subject matter, Guilty manages to keep everyone listening. And the progressive yet accessible beats from Mr. Porter, Madlib, and select others often add to the replay value. *Max Herman*



LYRICS BORN
EVERYWHERE AT ONCE
Anti-/US/CD

As his latest solo LP's title suggests, Lyrics Born tries to move in countless directions; party-rocker, pensive MC, and love-struck poet are just a few sides of this ambitious Bay Area act. And LB knows he's conflicted. On the outstanding closer, "I Can't Decide," he discusses in double time how he wants to be a bachelor and husband, a rock star and rap star. Few hip-hoppers can go from dropping a dancehall-inspired number for the ladies ("Top Shelf") to a somber R&B-styled cut about racial identity ("Is It the Skin I'm In?"). And that's why Lyrics Born triumphs again. *Max Herman*



M83
SATURDAYS = YOUTH
Mute/US/CD

Though known for keyboard-filtered, foot-pedal-clipped, hypnotically dense hymnals, M83's Anthony Gonzalez could well start a side industry as a chocolatier. Because with this, M83's fifth full-length of synth chorales, Gonzalez has concocted an album that's 60 percent cocoa; it's not exactly sweet, but it's satisfying (a Milky Way Dark, if you will), textured without being grainy, and not as sinister as *Before the Dawn Heals Us*. M83 albums are more commonly spoken of in filmic metaphor, however, so it's apt to say that M83 is eschewing Jerry Bruckheimer crescendos for the more diffused contrasts of Michael Mann, tinged with John Hughes' wistful flush. Recalling Kate Bush, Boards of Canada, and the Cocteau Twins, Gonzalez progresses as he looks back. *Tony Ware*

MISS KITTIN
BATBOX

Nobody's Bizzness/GER/CD
Miss Kittin has always managed to keep her own identity while collaborating with others. Her vocals helped make Felix da Housecat's "Silver Screen Shower Scene" so memorably fantastic in 2002, and even when she worked with The Hacker, her vision of herself—coolly deadpan vocals from a tongue-in-cheek dominatrix—shone through. That makes it all the more unfortunate that this album, for all its dark electro, lacks that same strength. *Batbox*, as she details on her website, is supposed to be an uplifting journey through change, but ultimately that change is lacking from track to track. Even the glossy, high-quality production can't give this album the energy to rise above the middling bar it sets for itself. *Luciana Lopez*

SILJE NES
AMES ROOM

FatCat/UK/CD
Despite her classical piano training, Norway's Silje Nes developed her songwriting abilities by teaching herself to play guitar and recording that process on her laptop's built-in mic. Her debut, *Ames Room*, documents that progression with messy edits, old synthesizers, and humble guitar playing. The result is a bedroom record that parallels artists like Múm in sonic warmth and singer-songwriter Chad VanGaalen in exploratory willingness. "Over All" opens the record with tinkled keyboard pop, while "Shapes, Electric" drowns her plaintive guitar in blips and glitches. They may be over-ambitious at times, but the songs on *Ames Room* remain dreamy and charming. *Josiah Hughes*

NICOLAY & KAY
TIME:LINE

Nicolay Music/US/CD
Denmark-born, North Carolina-based producer Nicolay met Houston MC Kay (of The Foundation) the way everybody meets these days: over the internet (specifically, the okayplayer.com boards). Nicolay's musical vision is a warm, wistful one, and his pillowy melodies cocoon Kay's smooth, reflective style, creating an effect that's stirring at times, mesmerizing at others. "As the Wheel Turns," easily the tightest cut on the album, displays Nicolay's ability to conjure a vibrant spell from simple, rich loops, echoing Kay's observations of what it means to navigate life's daily struggles. Check "I've Seen Rivers," a Langston Hughes-referencing joint about the staying power of civilizations that feels like it could only come from a much more experienced rapper. *Janet Tzou*

OCRILIM
ANNWN

Hydra Head/US/CD
Best known as the relentless guitarist for avant-metal duo Orthrelm, Mick Barr, who has contributed to nearly 40 releases, works under many aliases. His debut for Hydra Head as Ocrlim, a word he describes as "thoughts" instead of actions, is a remarkable 80-minute blast. Through seven movements of Barr's unmatched and over-thought technique, *Annwn* bears the mark of high art. Unlike the calculated irony of The Fucking Champs or the schizophrenic skronk of Hella, Barr's layered guitar-work draws from the intensity of free jazz and the mechanization of electronic music. Remarkably intense and unconcerned with the outside world, *Annwn* is a mind-blowing listen. *Josiah Hughes*

ONE BE LO
THE R.E.B.I.R.T.H.

Subterraneous/US/CD
Michigan-based One Be Lo is an incredibly versatile rapper, and he displays his talent well on his latest, *The R.E.B.I.R.T.H.* Whether kicking battle rhymes ("Smash"), writing vivid narratives ("Headlines"), or repping his state ("Born & Raised"), his wordplay is more than engaging. But his productions and song construction are extremely weak: Cliché dialogue samples, generic hooks, and sub-par beats plague at least 10 of the 12 tracks. "Hip-Hop Heaven" is as predictable as it sounds, while "Don't Sleep" might have reverse effects. One Be Lo may be one of underground hip-hop's brightest, but *The R.E.B.I.R.T.H.* has huge flaws that detract from his obvious talent. *David Ma*

PACIFIKA
ASUNCION

Six Degrees/US/CD
Using flamenco sensibilities with tasteful electronics, *Ascuncion*, from Canada-based Pacifika, employs a rhythm of *palmas* and congas to hold a sweet midtempo groove on opener "Me Cai." Vocalist Silvana Kane's breathy whispers carry the melody for a few minutes, until a deep and dubwise bass rearranges the landscape of the song. Toby Peters handles the low-end, while Adam Popowitz completes this Latin-based trio fueled by pop sensibilities. Peruvian native Kane is strong and interesting enough on vocals to keep this debut coasting smoothly, while her backing team is diverse enough—including rumba, jazz, reggae, and synthesized Andean flutes—to create a refreshing and light electronic breakthrough. *Derek Beres*

“LEAVE YOUR EASY LIFE, LEAVE WHAT YOU ARE GIVEN FOR THE FUTURE. SET OFF ON THE ROADS.” *Andre Breton*

WORKING FOR A NUCLEAR FREE CITY
BUSINESSMEN & GHOSTS



Part-way through each disc...there comes a point of realization that what's happening is something very special (From Review) *Under The Radar*

The band's best bass-driven dance floor bangers and stately, textured landscapes are all here, and there are a couple of fresh surprises, too... WFNFC weave woozy atmospheres for an intoxicated ride borne bathed in subway fluorescent or beadlight balogen... *Businessmen & Ghosts* is a long-overdue U.S. document of a band that might just be getting really interesting. *Pitchfork Media*

"Their mix of psychedelia, krautrock, and electronic does sound strange - deliciously so" *NME*

WFNFC is about both quantity and quality... As their songs shift from noisy shoegaze to cinematic beauty to Madchester beats, we're taken on one hell of a ride...This band should be fucking huge. *The Tripwire*

www.workingfornuclearfreecity.com
www.myspace.com/wfnfc



DEAF DUMB + BLIND RECORDINGS *Brooklyn, NY*
www.deafdumbandblind.net

FUJIYA & MIYAGI

TRANSPARENT THINGS



"Exhilarating...impressively melodic." *Mojo*

"Odes to porn mags and busted ankles over the most irresistible grooves." *Uncut*
"This is dance music downsized for iPods but also indie rock expanded for the dance floor." *Spin* Jan 07 - 4 stars ****

"sure-footed disco-punk...a sweet, clever, charismatic record." *NME* 8/10

"They're doing for 70s krautrock and motorik what the DFA did for early 80s electro. Indeed, without even being asked, they've gone and done the unthinkable: They've actually made krautrock fun." *Pitchfork Media*

www.fujiya-miyagi.co.uk
www.myspace.com/fujiyuandmiyagi

FUJIYA & MIYAGI
NEW ALBUM COMING SUMMER 2008



SIDESTEPPER
THE BUENA VIBRA SOUND SYSTEM

Palm Pictures/US/CD

While this third release from Afro-Colombian soundsystem Sidestepper smells of contract fulfillment—a collection of remixes and unreleased cuts after just two studio albums—there is a bit of irony that it's the group's best offering yet. Credit founder Richard Blair for this mixture of Colombian, Jamaican, and Nigerian sounds, where he tweaks the homeland rhythms of Bogota with dub and Afrobeat elements. The previously unavailable "Que Sera," with a stylish reggae backdrop amidst the scattering calls of male and female toasters, is probably Blair's best sonic creation to date. The other 10 tracks, including a mercurial reworking of "Deja," provide ample support. *Derek Beres*



TALL FIRS
TOO OLD TO DIE YOUNG

Ecstatic Peace/US/CD

Like their Ecstatic Peace boss Thurston Moore, Tall Firs have a gift for slanted guitar atmospheres and laid-back vocals that feature as much slang as soliloquy. And like Moore's Sonic Youth, the structure of Tall Firs' anthems, like "So Messed Up" and "Blue in the Dark," feature extended periods of guitar exposition mashed between their beginnings and ends. But Firs reach down closer to Neil Young's roots than Glenn Branca's on homespun yarns like "Lookout" and the finale, "Secrets and Lies." But that's just the back story: If you're a chilled-jam fan that likes a freak-out here and there, Tall Firs' second record will tickle your inner lava lamp. *Scott Thill*



MATTHIAS TANZMANN
RESTLESS

Moon Harbour/GER/CD

As a resident DJ at Germany's Distillery since 1997, this deep-house superstar has been busy contributing classics to the Dessous, FM Musik, and Freude Am Tanzen labels. This album arrives after its maker traveled the world, discovering what makes crowds tick. Using dreamy pads and filtered key sweeps, the tracks here offer a soothing approach to dance, full of hazy tones and atmospheric quirks. From the powerful cowbell-laden peak groove of "Keep On," to the electro-reminiscent bass work on "Bulldozer," the fully mixed album delivers a rollercoaster trip through the thrills of minimal tech-house. *Praxis*

SEBASTIEN TELLIER
SEXUALITY

Record Makers/FRA/CD

In the publicity photos for Sebastien Tellier's third album, the thoroughly bearded Frenchman sits in front of his piano, the robot hand of Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo resting tenderly on his shoulder. The Daft Punk member produced this electro-cabaret masterpiece and, perhaps appositely, Tellier eschews homage to *Starship Troopers* (as on previous album *Politics*) and refocuses on his most human impulses: both "Pomme" and "Kilometer" are cut through with *les bruits orgasmiques*. Tellingly, Tellier has cited George Michael's "I Want Your Sex" and the soundtracks of Wendy Carlos as great inspirations on the release. Thankfully, the Paris-based eccentric's take on sexuality produces an album that is uniquely engrossing and much more than mere onanism. *David Hemingway*

THA 4ORCE
MIND THE GAP ANTHEMS V2

BBE/UK/CD

London's multi-tasking hip-hop act Tha 4orce collects a pack of his affiliates for this album, which falls somewhere between hip-hop and soul. For the most part, this MC/DJ/producer thrives in the company of his guests. His solo offerings, like the mildly braggadocious "Do This Well," aren't bad, but they lack the potency of the collaborations. The jazzy soul and smooth back-up vocals of Pete Cherry on "Precise Precision" make for a good combination with Tha 4orce's fast raps. Then when he puts the mic down on "Magnificent," he treats his fellow Brit rhymers Poynt Blak with some classic crunchy drums. As a collective effort at least, *Mind the Gap Anthems V2* hits the spot. *Max Herman*

THE OUT CIRCUIT
PIERCE THE EMPIRE WITH A NEW SOUND

Lujo/US/CD

The Out Circuit is the shoegaze/hardcore project of Frodus bassist Nathan Burke. *Pierce the Empire With a New Sound* is his first record since 2003, and boasts collaborations with members of Thrice and Roadside Monument. Opener "Come Out Shooting" attempts to do just that, adding synths to a Refused-style jam, while "Across the Light" utilizes layers of ambient sounds with dreamy keyboards. Due to inconsistency in sound and slickly produced vocals, however, much of the album comes across cheesy, particularly the near-goth "Passchendaele" and the adult-contemporary-feeling "We." Despite a handful of solid ideas, *Pierce the Empire* is ultimately a pet project for a select indie audience. *Josiah Hughes*

THEE SILVER MT. ZION MEMORIAL ORCHESTRA & TRA-LA-LA BAND
13 BLUES FOR THIRTEEN MOONS

Constellation/CAN/CD

Originally an outlet for GYBE! founder Efrim Menuck's piano compositions, A Silver Mt. Zion has grown in name and scope over the last 10 years. *13 Blues for Thirteen Moons* expands on Menuck's apocalyptic vision. Opener "1,000,000 Died to Make This Sound" has all the elements of a classic ASMZ epic: guitar and violin crescendos, choir vocals, and Efrim's trademark yelp. Elsewhere, the 15-minute title track breaks new ground for the band with Black Sabbath-esque guitars, while "Black Waters Blowed/ Engine Broke Blues" hits a few heavy, dark climaxes. All of this builds to the moving perfection of "Blindblindblind," where layered guitars build a symphonic funeral march. *Josiah Hughes*

WHY?
ALOPECIA

Anticon/US/CD

For artists as self-immolating as Oakland hip-hop/future-pop purveyors Why?, titling an album *Alopecia* (an unpleasant form of hair loss) is no huge surprise. Why? main man Yoni Wolf's deft lyricism often finds its focus in the granular details of everyday life, reveling in the mundane but often parlaying it into transcendent beauty. Maintaining his new focus on sung songs, started on Why?'s last record, *Elephant Eyelash*, Wolf's ready voice evokes everyone from The Mountain Goats' John Darnielle to They Might Be Giants' John Linnell but manages to always deliver the songs with unsentimental emotion. *Alopecia* finds Why? refining and clarifying the scope of its music to mostly excellent ends. *Sam Mickens*



Check out thousands more reviews at XLR8R.com/reviews, including new releases from Don Cavalli, Caspa & Rusko, Chessie, Dizze Rascal, DJ Hell, Farmers Manual, Kutiman, Silje Nes, Principles of Geometry, Seiji, Son Lux, and more.



MC Gringo

MC GRINGO
GRINGÃO

Man Recordings/US/CD

If the car commercials, U.S. club play, and the flood of media stories didn't prove that *baile* funk had gone worldwide, *Gringão* surely does. MC Gringo, a white native of Stuttgart, Germany, is the only non-Brazilian to make waves in the Rio *favela* funk scene. His debut album—a raw take on *baile's* now-ubiquitous twist of Miami bass, samba, and primitivist hip-hop—proves why. On the one hand, *Gringão* is purist: Tracks like "Alemão" are like blueprints for the bass-shattering sound of the Rio ghettos. (This German ex-punk even raps almost exclusively in Portuguese.) But Gringo's sampled Forro accordions and carnival cowbells, combined with an obvious affection for American hip-hop on tracks like "Berimbal," give him his own sound. And it's one that could easily translate back into the Western culture that spawned the MC, making *baile's* globalization just about complete. *Justin Hopper*

rock
drum & bass
hip-hop
house
downtempo
funk/soul
reggae

timely shipping
12" Vinyl & LPs
dj equipment
accessories
digital downloads



djhut.com
preserving while progressing

Comp Reviews 4.08

Soulphiction



A DECADE OF DECADENT DANCE SOUNDS CEMENTS SONAR KOLLEKTIV'S LOUNGE LEGACY.

TEN YEARS, WHO CARES?
Sonar Kollektiv/GER/2CD

When Sonar Kollektiv first opened its doors in the late '90s, acid jazz was already fading into something more commercial. And while the "eclectic lounge" sound happily embraced genre-splicing, clubgoers and critics alike questioned how the afterhours music scene might evolve. Today, just try to tell label chiefs Jazzanova that these chilled-out vibes have seen their day. After 10 years of floating their mercurial jazz/hip-hop/house fusions onto mixes and dancefloors, their Sonar Kollektiv imprint continues to push the ever-blooming sound that it helped establish as the electronic music staple it is today.

Many labels claim to explore versatility, but Sonar has embraced its cross-genre directive with a voracious appetite for both stylistic and compositional fusion, resulting in a dizzying array of unexpected sonic blends. *Ten Years, Who Cares?* delivers a satisfying sampling of the label's better finds; it's a great starter for those still unfamiliar with Jazzanova's stable and highlights why DJs continue to look to Sonar for new finds. The first CD culls together Sonar singles, mostly of the downtempo, soul-drenched-vocal variety. More than anything, the Sonar Kollektiv sound is a lush one: rhythms abound, rich in instrumentation and shimmering with dense layers. The most memorable pieces bind these sumptuous passages with percussive structures, like Soulphiction's "Used," where Suzana Rozkosny's breathy croons morph rugged, macho beats into something eloquent and sultry. Forss' "Using Splashes" could be the gem of this collection, showcasing the effortless pastiche for which SK is renowned: Dreamy atmospherics, hip-hop swipes, and grimy funk smolder together seamlessly, as beats tug and pull at each other, shuffling to fit within a tricky breakbeat puzzle.

Ten Years' second CD, a mixed set, better demonstrates the palpable, we-just-really-love-music exuberance of Jazzanova's sound, a vibe that the group's fans will recognize from their peerless sophomore album *In Between* (certainly one of the

most sophisticated albums ever produced in the amorphous "lounge" category). Like *In Between*, it's hard to find a bad tune on this dancefloor-directed disc: A soaring, yearning remix of the Jazzas' track "That Night" opens the mix, while Sequel's "I've Been Waiting" flexes wavy, psychedelic notes into a gentle reverb of melody and funk, only to dissolve into a throaty, deep-house vocal growl. Techno also makes an appearance: Moonstarr's elegant "Detroit" lives up to its moody namesake by dropping angular tones onto ethereal melodies, creating a simple, pulsing cadence that's nothing short of electrifying. Segueing into Swedish duo Arken's supple, acid-tinged track, "Arken 10," the Jazzanova compilers display their expert mixing ears, rubbing coarse techno textures into a smooth, ambient-house vibe.

After all this time, it's easy to forget why people started talking about acid jazz in the first place, but *Ten Years* reminds us how seductive this sound can be. Maybe the voodoo lies in the music's ability to instantly conjure images of cool: Elegant, chill vibes emanate from these pieces, going down as easily as that icy cocktail in your hand. *Ten Years* is a vibrant document of lounge morphing into its next phase—and a testament to how genre categories, even a decade ago, are rendered meaningless to the knowing ear. *Janet Tzou*

REVIEWS COMPILATIONS

ACHTUNG! GERMAN GROOVES

Bureau B/GER/CD

It's hard to imagine that the culture that brought you expressionism could really get funky. But listen to the Volkswagen-chase grooves and Wagnerian wah-wah on *Achtung!*'s 20 instrumentals from the '60s and '70s, and things might fall into place. This isn't "the good foot"; these are jazz big bands taking on the new breed with the same Teutonic experimental formalism that brought us Kraftwerk. The flutes and break beats of sample-ready '60s library funk are all there. But so are the Argento-soundtrack synths, the insect-like guitars, and a backwards cover of "House of the Rising Sun." Like Fritz Lang directing *Austin Powers*: odd, but you'll love it. *Justin Hopper*

BODY LANGUAGE VI: JUNIOR BOYS

Get Physical/GER/CD

Junior Boys' own music is so layered with nostalgia and longing that it's fair to presume that they understand the emotive power of the mixtape: the C90 (and, subsequently, CD-R80) as not only an expression of aesthetics but also as a document of a time and place or a declaration of love or friendship. That they close their contribution to the *Body Language* series with the overt romanticism of Bill Nelson's "When Your Dream of Perfect Beauty Comes True" might be taken as such an indication. In that context, tracks like Rework's "Love Love Love Yeah (Chloe Remix)" and Chloe's own "Be Kind to Me" sound deliciously, gloriously creepy. Nice, with a little more grit than you might expect. *David Hemingway*

FABRICLIVE 38: CRAZE

Fabric/UK/CD

Time magazine crowned Craze America's best DJ in 2001, and you can make a case that he's the best in the world, particularly in turntablism. Just check his three wins at the DMC World Championships. But he can spin a banging club set, too, laced with turntablism's voracious appetite for beats, no matter from where. For this latest entry in the long-running *FabricLive* series, that means tracks leaping from hip-hop to electro to ghetto-tech and more. The *Miami Vice* theme? Check. Chromeo? Yup. Earth, Wind & Fire? Sure. But Craze makes it all work, so sharply mixed you barely notice just how good he really is—and he's very, very good. *Luciana Lopez*

FAVOURITE PLACES

Audiobulb/UK/CD

As the title suggests, 10 abstract electronic artists invite listeners to get lost in their favorite places. Field recordings of these places are followed by musical invocations of them. Dot Tape Dot scrubs himself in his tub, John Kannenberg transforms the British Museum into a cathedral through which thousands of ghosts pass, and Biosphere loops a half-asleep jazz ballad from lighthouse sounds. Some cheat by claiming their studios as their favorite places, and many here perform introspective works that ignore listeners. Still, there ought to be more experiments like *Places*, at a time when rootlessness and alienation from the outside world prevail. *Cameron Macdonald*

MAIDEN VOYAGE: A JOURNEY INTO THE WORLD OF SOUL AND BOOGIE— COMPILED BY RAINER TRUBY, THEO THOENNESSEN & ROLAND APPEL

Compost/GER/CD

Any party that lasts 15 years in Munich must be doing something right—and the Maiden Voyage night, which has changed venues several times since its 1993 inauguration, does plenty right: The excellent trio that helms the night's focuses on soul, boogie, disco, and jazz. Now they've unleashed a compilation based on the party, full of soulful vocals, beats, and tight horns. There are some usual suspects and familiar names (Roy Ayers and Diana Ross, for example), but a few surprises, as well, like the disco version of "Georgy Porgy" from yacht-rockers Toto. Here's hoping the trio takes another trip out soon. *Luciana Lopez*

SPIRITS IN THE MATERIAL WORLD: A REGGAE TRIBUTE TO THE POLICE

Shanachie/US/CD

The Police owed much of their sound to reggae, and JA artists return the favor on *Spirits in the Material World*, a comp of dancehall, lovers rock, and roots covers of Sting & Co.'s familiar tunes. No dyed-(blond)-in-the-wool Police fan or dreadlocked Rasta should be mad at Junior Reid's take on "Synchronicity I," Horace Andy's cover of "Invisible Sun," or Toots & the Maytals' version of "De Doo Doo De Daa Daa Daa." Sure, nothing can redeem the overly fluffy "Every Little Thing She Does Is Magic" (especially not UB40's Ali Campbell) and Joan Osborne isn't exactly Judy Mowatt, but Gregory Isaacs doing "So Lonely" needed to happen (even if it's 20 years late). *Eric K. Arnold*

STRANGE BREAKS & MR. THING

BBE/UK/CD

Champion turntablist and up-and-coming producer Mr. Thing keeps his scratching and beat-juggling skills at bay on this compilation of '60s and '70s breaks. Surely, it would have been nice if this U.K. native would have flipped these dusty tracks a bit, but as is, these songs are largely enjoyable. Classic funk (Blackbuster's "Shack Up") and tropical tunes (Original Tropicana Steel Band's "Calypso Rock") are just a few of the styles preferred by Mr. Thing. His most surprising selection, though, is the suspenseful soundtrack music heard on "Preludium Cis Moll." Like many songs found here, this track has often been sampled, making this disc a virtual hip-hop blueprint that's recommended for any crate digger. *Max Herman*

TRIPLE R: SELECTION 6

Trapez/GER/CD

Richard Riley Reinhold (a.k.a. Triple R) practically defined Cologne's minimal sound as a producer and Traum/Trapez label owner. His staple Triple R mixes took some critical hits the last few years, but Reinhold responds with an elegant, immaculately machined mix on *Selection 6* that never wavers in its quiet intensity, yet takes in the global growth of minimal with ease. To wit: Mihalis Sifris' "R2" is a gorgeous tweak-fest in the Underground Resistance tradition (via his native Greece); Roland Dill's arty, hectic "Modus Operandi" spins spiky glitch into shuffle gold; and Reggy von Oer's "Metza" dips into soundtrack strings. Yet each goes smoothly into the mix in classic Trapez style. *Rob Geary*

Tina Weymouth



FUNKY NASSAU: THE COMPASS POINT STORY 1980-1986

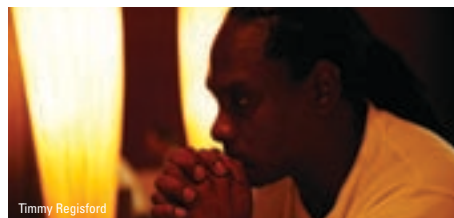
Strut/US/CD

Hordes of foreign rock stars became richer after recording at Chris Blackwell's Compass Point studio in the Bahamas. The Rolling Stones, AC/DC, Wings, and even Judas Priest visited the place, but a lesser-known fact is that '80s psychedelic funk bloomed there. *Funky Nassau* documents such works, both famous and obscure. The Talking Heads' fractal-funk masterwork "Born Under Punches (The Heat Goes On)" shines bright here alongside the Tom Tom Club's Tina Weymouth-showcasing classic "Genius of Love." Disco avenged its false 1979 death well at Compass Point, where Bits & Pieces' "Don't Stop the Music" and Set the Tone's "Dance Sucker" flew in the face of the "disco sucks" hordes. Not everything is golden, though: Grace Jones delivers a flat, lite-reggae jaunt, while the treble is cranked up too high on Sly Dunbar's "River Niger." Nonetheless, *Funky Nassau* gives overdue attention to a Caribbean treasure trove. *Cameron Macdonald*



En Tu Casa By Nick Chacona

HOUSEKEEPING: FROM TECH AND MINIMAL TO DEEP AND TRADITIONAL



R&B remixes have always held a special place in house music's heart. Some are commissioned, but the best ones are usually illegitimate bastards; whatever the case, when you take a popular track and spin it for the club set, you know you've got at least a smidge of a built-in audience. One of the most highly anticipated mixes this year, **Quentin Harris'** version of **Chaka Kahn's** "Disrespectful," has finally come to record shops, but the buzz that surrounded the song for so long seems to have been shifted towards an extremely limited version of the track by **JoVonn**. Good luck, record hunters!

Marathon man **Timmy Regisford** breaks out of his R&B-bootleg shell and smacks a deep-house homerun for the old-school record distributor Downtown 161 (who, incidentally, pays my bills), with "Downtown 161." The title track and requisite dub are built around a throbbing classic organ line, yet they pulse with modern tech-house sensibilities. Break out the baby powder when this one gets dropped!

New York-based deep-house imprint Soul People Music, whose **Black Jazz Consortium** project has gained a loyal following over the past year, sees its second vinyl release from label boss **Fred P**, entitled *The No Looking Back* EP. Atmosphere is the theme here, as each of the four tunes explores a number of rolling synth-scapes and some Afro-inflected house percussion. If you're a student of the Larry Heard School of Deep, then be sure to peep this.

California house's living legend **Doc Martin** continues to live the great American rave dream with his Sublevel semi-monthly party and deep-house label of the same name—a true testament to his staying power. Up next on the imprint is a double-12" sampler featuring West Coast heavies **Sunshine Jones**, **L.A.D.M.** (Doc and **Lillia**), plus Japan's **Little Big Bee**, and a special irie DM mix of **Dubtribe!** A worthy double-pack of stoned-out, sun-soaked dub jams from the people that know it best!

Master at Work **Louie Vega** got some fans twisted with the digital pre-release of his upcoming single with Baltimore's original vocal diva **Ultra Nate**, aptly titled "Twisted." Nonetheless, the collab is one of the most memorable in the Vega catalog and sure to become a dancefloor smasher.

Bavaria continues to creatively stir the house pot, and this month's gold star goes to **Lutzenkirchen** for his latest release, "Paperboy" (Great Stuff). While the remix and bonus track are pleasant enough, the original mix dominates, combining a winning blend of booming, bouncy beats à la Samim, with serious funk-ed-out guitar and piano licks that could easily be heard on a late-'90s Atavisme release.

Jamie "Jimpster" O'Dell's sleek house outfit Freerange comes with a barrage of releases this spring, first with Odell's own "Dangly Panther" (mixed by **Jooris Voorn** and **Audiomontage**) and then a pair of three-track EPs to mark the label's 100th release (which comes in two parts). The pick of the litter is most definitely **Milton Jackson's** "Ghost in My Machines," an updated 21st-century take on organ house.

My pick for producer to watch this year is **Mathis Kaden**. After a stunning performance on the remix for **Pheek's** "En Légre Suspension," Kaden continues to forge ahead with his ubiquitous Afro-minimalist aesthetic on the *Lucidas* EP for German label Freude-am-Tanzen. Imagine a more spaced-out **Henrik Schwarz** meeting **Villalobos** in the studio at 4 a.m. and you're almost there.



Broken Business By Peter Nicholson

FUTURE JAZZ AND BUSTED BEATS



Let's start things off on the left foot, staggering into this month's installment with the latest from our good friends in The Netherlands, 4lux Recordings. These cats have brought us classics from label boss-man **Gerd** and **Delgui**, and now they tap **OliverDaySoul** for "Brain." The a-side has some wild, Rick James-weirdness-in-the-basement-worthy vocals over a deliberate, lurching beat, but I'm really digging the b, where "Potion" provides the cure in the form of sweet soul—an easy Rhodes riff, soft handclaps, and a litting guitar lick.

Nickodemus is a name that's been around for a hot minute and Washington, DC's Eighteenth Street Lounge just dropped a pair of 12s that shows how the man behind Turntables on the Hudson and a host of other hot NYC parties is no slouch in the studio. First up, Nickodemus gives just the right dose of syncopated percussion to underscore the sultry singing of **Natalia Clavier** on **Federico Aubele's** "La Esquina." Next, Nickodemus and **Thievery Corporation** do it "one hand washes the other"-style, with Nick giving a mellow bhangra flavor and easy hip-hop beat to "Supreme Illusion" and TC returning the favor by dosing Nick's "Crazy Stranger" with their blend of psychedelic dance jazz. Melodica and clarinet have never been more beguiling or bumping!

Must give a shout out to the little people—the 7-inches, that is! Only got ahold of one this month, courtesy of the good sorts at Tru Thoughts. They bring us **Saravah Soul**, who delivers "Nao Posso te Levam a Serio" with belted-out Portuguese lyrics, tight horns, and a big-time funky bass. The b turns up the heat via "Supersossego," with syncopated snare shots driving the train all the way to a *batucada* breakdown that will blow yer brain. Tru Thoughts also has the good grace to bring us a band that's simply too big for a 7", New Orleans' **Hot 8 Brass Band**. The highlight of this 12" is their raucous version of Snoop Dogg's "What's My Name?" with a feverishly funky series of solos and an inescapable celebratory vibe that showcases

the Big Easy's indefatigable party spirit.

Nobody does drama like **Cinematic Orchestra** and they're up to their usual tense 'n' moody strings business on the remix of "Ink" for **The Dining Rooms' Ink EP3** on Italy's Schema label. The flip falls at the other end of the spectrum, with **Christian Prommer** taking things deep in the direction of Detroit. Gotta love his drums—tight congas, shimmering bells (with a gamelan flavor), and an insistent kick turn "Fatale" into a real swinger.

If you're ready to float on home with a little four-on-the-floor, can't think of a better way than Sonar Kollektiv's latest from **Nomumbah**. Hailing from Sao Paulo, Brazil, this trio taps former **Arrested Development** singer **Nadirah Shakoore** to lend her gorgeous vocals to this reversion of a track originally released by Amanita. With a very subtle Brazilian flair to the woodblock and soft bass drum, gentle key stabs on the up beat and delicate strings, "Like a Rainbow" is the pot of gold at the end of your set.

the teenagers reality check

album in stores now



www.myspace.com/theteenagers
www.xlrecordings.com





fabric38
M.A.N.D.Y.
Released: 02.12.08

Berlin-based creative duo M.A.N.D.Y. take their Get Physical Records roots and prime your ears for a full workout with their elegant fabric 38 mix. With standout tracks from Gui Boratto, Lucio Aquilina, Audion and the cream of the Get Physical crop, M.A.N.D.Y. map the motion between electro-influenced house, subdisco and techno on its way from subtle reflective inner vision to sheer dancefloor delight.

M.A.N.D.Y. WMC Date: March 27th MIAMI – Get Physical Party @ Studio A



FABRICLIVE39
Craze
Released: 03.11.08

FABRICLIVE 38: Craze is a rally ride though 74 minutes of no-excuses dancefloor joy, shamelessly laden with guilty pleasures and renegade styles from one of the most skilled DJs ever to stand before two turntables. Taking cuts from the new school (Cool Kids, Bangers & Cash, Chromeo and Kid Sister) to stalwart sounds from N.O.R.E, Coldcut and Tuff Crew to licks less likely from Earth, Wind and Fire, Armand Van Helden and The Chemical Brothers, this is a mix'n'blend masterclass.

CRAZE WMC Date: March 27th MIAMI – Suite / Snatch



fabric39
Robert Hood
Released: 04.15.08

fabric 39 stars the visionary Robert Hood: one of the founding fathers of Detroit's incomparable Underground Resistance and the innovator behind hypnotic minimal techno. Fabric 39 is simplified, intelligent music that moves and challenges at a fast, unrelenting pace, imaginatively mimicking the feeling of Detroit itself in all its industrial glory. A no-nonsense, trend-defying mix that doesn't timidly tiptoe around the obvious; it boldly stomps right through the unfamiliar and unexpected.

Forthcoming in the series: DJ Yoda, Mark Farina, Noisia, Simian Mobile Disco, Åme.



www.fabriclondon.com

REVIEWS COLUMNS



After Silence By Martin De Leon

THE OUTER ORBITS OF ELECTRONIC MUSIC



DJ /rupture
(photo by Rocio Rodriguez Salceda)



Yellow Fever (photo by Sandy Carson)



El Hijo de la Cumbia

Ah, fat laces and spring's dawning: Nothing beats a month like April. For its occasion, I tried to fish out some dope stuff, from trashy *cumbias* to record labels with heart-warming names like Dutty Artz. New labels are sprouting up just as often as "ethnic music" is getting jacked with electronic soundscapes—and I'm okay with that.

First off, a band I first heard about through a friend of a friend (Greg Saunier of Deerhoof)—Northampton, Massachusetts' **Fat Worm of Error**. Like a spastic No Wave band, they're known for wild live performances and a terrific record, *Pregnant Babies Pregnant With Pregnant Babies* (Load), which is akin to the dark rock of Liars' *They Were Wrong, So We Drowned*. They're working on a new album that will make DNA proud.

But the original wild thing is still **Tone Loc**, unless, of course you're counting **Peaches**. Her remix of the classic '80s rap tune "Wild Thing" on this 20th-anniversary 12" (Delicious Vinyl) sounds weirdly ironic with its squeaky synths, simple beat, and back-and-forth raps with Loc's old-ass lyrics. Industrial noises take over the track (imagine if Tone had been born in Berlin)—and somehow it bumps.

Argentina's Bersa Discos is a great resource for those who enjoy when *cumbias* and experimental electronic beats are glued together. Two DJs out of Buenos Aires (by way of the Bay) gave birth to this beast, and their sick 12", **El Hijo de la Cumbia's** "La Mara Tomaza," has a fresh *vallenato* rhythm layered with a chunky reggaeton beat and a guitar loop from Mexico's greatest goth rock band, Caifanes. Scoop this up.

For those that don't like to shake their asses, there's The Social Registry's "The Social" 7-inch subscription club. The New York label drops German collective **Metabolismus'** beautiful, melancholic '60s folk for their seventh release in the series. "Somnia" is like watching a Tarkovsky film—all whispery violins and a boundless melody that is both haunting and smart.

A Ph.D. with two turntables, New York's DJ **/rupture** and fellow beat-crusher **Matt Shadetek** have started a record label, Dutty Artz. To all those who may be curious, this is how you start a label: get a website (duttartz.com), make a dirty bootleg 12" single (Shadetek's "Can't Breathe") and start an internet TV channel. Peel back their eyes because these dudes are serious.

Also serious is the geeky rock community in Austin. **Yellow Fever**, a brilliant four-piece that plays gorgeous, architectural indie rock, dropped their brilliant 7" single, "Culver City" (Hugpatch), where singer Jennifer Moore comes on like a French Cat Power—but way better.

Cheery British band **Sunny Day Sets Fire** uses big-hearted pop with a Beach Boys twist on their new remix EP, *Stranger* (IAMSOUND). Though the original is not the strongest track, it's the bangers by **XXXchange** of **Spankrock** ("Adrenaline"), **Diplo** ("Brainless"), and Brazilian electro-rock cats **CSS** that makes this EP worth grabbing.

In other news, Bay Area experimentalists **Xiu Xiu** unleashed a video webzine along with their new record, *Women as Lovers* (Kill Rock Stars), which is terrific. Catch it at womenslovers.com.

Lastly, Brooklyn's **Glasslands** gallery and show space is back up and running, which is awesome. Like the sunshine clawing through my window.



Photo by Kate Fruchty

Leftfield Guest Reviews: Cryptacize

Ex-Deerhoof member Chris Cohen has always kept a few irons in the fire. During his time with the experimental rockers extraordinaire, Cohen continued to focus on his Curtains side-project, and most recently has climbed up college-radio charts as the singer-guitarist in Cryptacize, an avant-pop trio that he helms with co-lead singer Nedelle Torrisi and drummer Michael Carreira. This month you may just catch the tail end of their tour to support the release of *Dig That Treasure* (Asthmatic Kitty). For the time being, though, here's what they'll be playing in the van. *Derek Grey*
myspace.com/cryptacize

OKAY

"LOVELESS" FROM HUGGABLE DUST
Absolutely Kosher/US/CD

Marty Anderson's ideas are simple and they sound like classics right from the start. He makes a big mess out of them, either by himself or with the help of a big group of people, but they always come across so clean and so full of life. His music can be completely depressing or absolutely life-affirming, usually both at the same time. He says something directly to you—a philosophy of love and of the human body. He's a friend—I must admit—but because of this, I can tell you truthfully that if you know his music, you know him. *Chris Cohen*

TEAM ROBESPIERRE

"BLACK RAINBOW" FROM EVERYTHING'S PERFECT
Impose/US/CD

Four beats per chord, four chords per phrase, four phrases for each section. All repeated mechanically. Three sections, the third almost identical to the first, with an added keyboard layer. I wish I could tell if this song sounds so good because of or in spite of its rigid structure. *Michael Carreira*

MAN MAN

"TOP DRAWER" FROM RABBIT HABITS
Anti-/US/CD

The chorus is strangely pretty to me, made up of one big chord—even though it sounds like the guy's saying something about hot dogs. It's a lurching half-tempo kind of song, with carefully layered electric pianos, guitars, and marimbas. I like all the syncopation, which sounds really good on headphones. And then there's a really nice kind of instrumental section (like Xhol Caravan or Soft Machine or something), which I think makes the chorus prettier each time you hear it. This music takes its time to build and make its statement. *Chris Cohen*

CLINIC

"FREE NOT FREE"
Domino/US/MP3

I love it! The mood of the intro is completely misleading. The bass is way out of tune. The singer's intonation is really unique; he's always just a little sharp, whereas the bass player is entirely flat. These guys have a very sensitive taste for tuning-pleasing and not immediately graspable. *Chris Cohen*

THE GHOSTLY STORE

NOW CARRYING: FREEGUMS | ISO 50 | SPRFKR



USE CODE: GHOST1221 FOR 10% OFF YOUR ORDER

THEGHOSTLYSTORE.COM | GHOSTLY.COM



Read the Label By Jesse "Drosco" Serwer

HIP-HOP MIXTAPES, WHITE LABELS, AND SHIT



Alchemist



Minnesota

While I'm compelled to keep with *XLBB's* mission of covering forward-moving underground music in this column, hip-hop is a different animal than other genres covered here. As corporate and shut off to creativity as most rap has become, the freshest, most innovative shit still usually finds its way to the top if it has some semblance of accessibility.

Take **B.o.B.**, for example. Just a few months ago, dude was an 18-year-old kid from Atlanta with some crazy ideas and serious talent (how many teenage rappers do you know play their own guitar, keys, drums, and bass?). By the time you read this, he'll probably be on *TRL*, thanks to the runaway success of "Haterz Everywhere," arguably the most universal rap anthem since Jim Jones' "We Fly High." For more B.o.B., check his "Haterz" follow-up, "Lonely People," which samples and lyrically re-contextualizes The Beatles' "Eleanor Rigby," and also "Left Field," which should do for being weird what "Kick, Push" and "Vans" did for skateboarding. Though his *My Name Is B.o.B.* LP (Rebel Rock/Atlantic) is still a few months away, check myspace.com/bobat1 for the aforementioned leaks, and cop recent mixtapes *The Future* and *Eastside Takeover* (which pairs him with **Playboy Tre**, another up-and-coming ATLien with a sense of humor, and **Born Wit It**, respectively), for more sweetness.

Taking things in a more traditional, tried-and-true direction is **Kool G. Rap's** *Half a Klip* EP (Latchkey/Chinga Chang). G. Rap turns 40 this year but he's clearly not settling into his age easily; at nine tracks (plus two remixes), *Half* might be his most consistent effort since **DJ Polo** left the picture. He sounds as terrifyingly menacing as ever, and each hard-knock beat matches that intensity. Even "On the Rise Again"—which, amazingly, pairs the pioneer of gothic, East Coast stab-you-in-the-eye rap with the Disney-approved Haylie Duff—is fierce.

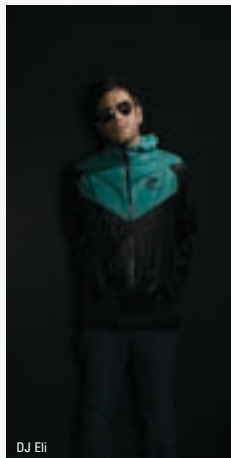
Minnesota recently hit me with some material from *The Diamond District* (Year-Round), an upcoming collaborative LP with fellow East Coast boom-bap kingpins **Showbiz** and **DJ Premier** (who produced "On the Rise Again," the aforementioned G. Rap/Haylie collabo). While it's not an official single, "Girls" finds Minnesota demonstrating his previously untapped (at least by mainstream commercial outfits) mic skills alongside **Mos Def**. 'Sota's group, **Money Boss Players**, meanwhile, turns up on the a-side of "New Religion" b/w "Shoot 'Em Down" (Heavy Bronx), a new 12" platter from U.K. purists **The P Brothers**. "Shoot 'Em Down" offers an introduction to **Ress Connected**, a quintet with enough diverse voices to evoke their New Rochelle, NY brethren Brand Nubian.

When **Alchemist** wanted to jump off his debut solo LP, *1st Infantry*, back in '04, the Mobb Deep-connected beat-maker paired unlikely partners **Nina Sky** and **Prodigy** (as well as the lesser-known **Illa Ghee**) together: the track, "Hold You Down," was a monster and *1st Infantry* was a classic. Apparently our boy Al can recognize a good formula when he sees one, as he's brought the Nina girls and Jailcell P back together (minus Illa Ghee) for "Key to the City" (Koch), the first single from his upcoming *Chemical Warfare* LP. While Al—taking the mic up for the first time in a minute—delivers a rusty verse at the beginning, Prodigy and Nina's chemistry saves the day.



Basic Needs By Kid Kameleon

LOW-END NECESSITIES, FROM RAGGA TO DUBSTEP AND BEYOND



DJ Eli



Kuma



Top Billin'

The Finns have produced some of my favorite tunes of the last couple years, from the secretive drum magic of **Fanu** to the slinky dubstep of **Tes La Rok** to the outright party madness of the **Swaeg** crew. Now I've got two more groups to keep an eye on. The first is **Clouds**, whose "Under the Dancing Feet" b/w "Worms" on Argon Records is surely the closest dubstep has come to the haunting torch-song brilliance of **Portishead**. Singer **Tiuu** sends shivers down my spine as she sings about "clouds shaped like a sine wave." The bittersweet tunes wrapped in dub are super-subtle and unique.

But if subtle isn't your bag, check out **Top Billin'**, Helsinki's answer to **Tittsworth** or **The Rub**. The crew of **Fiskars**, **Sir Nenis**, **Flipperi**, and associates churns out a remix a week—everything from Dire Straits to Scott McKenzie. Plus, the Top Billin' parties look off the hook. Two collections of material are out now: *Tales From Top Billin'* and *Tales From Top Billin' 2*, with contributions from **DJ Ayres**, **DJ Anonymous**, and **Raziek** among others. See and hear it all at their MP3 blog, topbillinmusic.com.

A couple months back I raved about Hollertronix #7 but gave all the credit to **Diplo**. Turns out half the production credit belongs to **Eli Escobar** (a.k.a. **DJ Eli**). He's created a slew of hip-hop and house productions over the last decade and recently has been bitten by the B-more club bug. Check out his solid James Brown remix on Tittsworth's *Ultimate T&A*, the awesome *Money Lotion Vol. 4* EP from late last year, and his remix of "Jimmy," from **M.I.A.'s** *Kala*. It's got to be her best official remix to date. Now he's at it again, remixing her track "Bamboo Banga," as well as **South Rakkas Crew's** "Get Mad Again" for Mad Decent. Did I mention he's also working on production for upcoming **will.i.am** and **Pase Rock** albums?

A new EP called *EP1* by **Harmonic 313** on Warp zapped me like a broken Speak & Spell recently. If that name looks sort of familiar, it's because it's the alias of **Mark Pritchard**, a man

who's had so many production credits over nearly two decades, it would take this whole column to list them. This one is a re-imagining of his lounge/minimal hip-hop project **Harmonic 33**, if it were filtered through a whole lot of Detroit techno, J Dilla, and 8-bit hackery. Check harmonic313.com/wordproblems for secret goodness.

A few odds and ends that I wasn't able to cover in the last few months: **Bonde do Role** put out the *Marina Gasolina* EP that features a bunch of new tracks and some great remixes from **CSS**, **Ladytron**, **Architecture in Helsinki**, and others. The best is from **Peaches**, a remix of "Marina Gasolina" that is truly weird and truly great. Also, **Rustie** continues the Glasgow takeover with *Café de Phresh*, his awesome EP of loping digital beats for SF/San Antonio MCs **215: The Freshest Kidz** on Stuff Records.

As well, *Dress 2 Sweat 4* (Dress 2 Sweat) is out now, with four awesome Baltimore club bangers. Where do they come from? Why, France, of course, courtesy of **Kazey & Bulldog**. That label is on fire.

A big shout to **Kuma** of Vancouver's Conspiracy Group. He's got the next release on Immerse with "Dawn Stepped Outside" b/w "Lost in Translation." Great atmospheric dubstep, but the *coup de grace* is that **Horsepower Productions** have come from out of nowhere to remix it—their first original production in three years. It's oh so sweet!

Final quick shout: Check out **Digital Woods** out of Denmark. First class 8-bit spooky dancehall/dub style. Find their great tracks at myspace.com/digitalwoods.



SAN FRANCISCO



LOS ANGELES



NEW YORK CITY



PARIS

A PLUS D present the biggest mashup bootleg party in the world



BOOTIE

RUINING YOUR FAVORITE SONG SINCE 2003

For all the monthly parties, go to: BootieUSA.com



MUNICH



BOSTON



DENVER



SECOND LIFE

Out Now on HYDRA HEAD RECORDS:

EUGENE S. ROBINSON
HH666-153 "FIGHT! Or, Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Not Kicking but We're Afraid You'll Go Too Far As Kicked for Asking" 2xCD Out Now

HAYAINO DAISUKI
HH666-142 "HEADBANGERS KARAOKE CLUB DANGEROUS FIRE" CD/EP 12" Out February 19th

XASTHUR
HH666-150 "A GATE THROUGH BLOODSTAINED MIRRORS" 2xCD Out Now

PELICAN
HH666-113 "AFTER THE CEILING CRACKED" DVD/3xCD Out Now

OCRILIM
HH666-144 "MANNY" CD Out Now

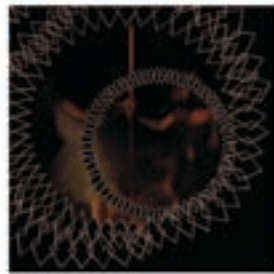
TORCHE
HH666-152 "MEANDERHAL" CD Out April 8th

CAVITY
HH666-148 "LAND INSIGNIFICANT" CD Out April 8th
And Out on TORTUGA RECORDINGS

TUSK
TR-036 "THE RESISTING DREAMER" CD/LP Out Now

5IVE
TR-037 "HESPERUS" CD Out February 19th

HYDRA HEAD RECORDS
Relentlessly Making Evils Since 1999
www.hydrahead.com



Rings *Black Habit* CD/digital
First Nation has become Rings. Rings is the new First Nation. This is their new record. It is called *Black Habit*.
Out now on Paw Tracks.



Beach House *Devotion* CD/LP/digital
Beach House have written eleven delicate pop tunes about love, feeling, and, of course, devotion. Their new album is a surefire antidote to the winter blues.
Out now on Carpark.



Excepter *Debt Dept.* CD/LP/digital
This is the sound of wartime cryptocracy. We are not trying to make money. We are trying to destroy money. You owe us this one. Get it.
Out now on Paw Tracks.



Tickley Feather *S/T* CD/digital
The newest addition to the Paw Tracks clan. Hypnotically beautiful lo-fi pop out of Philadelphia.
Out April on Paw Tracks



The Lines *Memory Span* CD/digital
Compiles all the long out-of-print singles from one of the most overlooked and underrated British bands of the post-punk/new wave era. Available for the first time on CD.
Out May on Acute

Coming soon: Dan Deacon, Ecstatic Sunshine, Lexie Mountain Boys, and more.

The Carpark Family of Labels
carparkrecords.com
acuterecords.com
paw-tracks.com

REVIEWS COLUMNS



Bubble Metropolis
By RL Tronik

TECHNO: MINIMAL, BANGING & BEYOND!



Force of Nature



Rodriguez Jr.



Ryoh Mitomi

The latest sounds of the underground seem to be returning to the deep end of the pool, and it only gets deeper and deeper. Take **Rodriguez Jr.**'s latest, *Rubbo Swingo* (Leena), for example. De-tuned synth melodies and solidly heavy four-on-the-floor business. Most people will clamor for the Loco Dice-esque "Soledad," but don't ignore the less Euro-sounding title track, which I like more.

What's 13 minutes long, totally spaced out, and more coveted than a nu-rave backpack? Why, a **Ricardo Villalobos** remix, of course. I still can't decide whether I think this guy is a genius or just plain lucky (possibly both?). Here, he flips "Toninas" from the new **Sun Electric** remix EP on Shitkatapult. Villalobos usually employs a Jackson Pollack-esque approach to his studio work and this one is in keeping with that abstract-impressionist ethos, throwing in large bits of another track from Sun Electric into this mix. Sprawling and heady.

One of my favorite labels of late has been Diynamic, whose penchant for putting out deep, thoughtful techno and tech-house extends to their 11th record, the *Trilogy* EP by **Stimming/H.O.S.H./Solomon**. If you're a fan of Innervisions, Still Music, and lbadan, this three-tracker is for you. "Radar" is my favorite; it starts off with minimal instrumental elements and eventually reveals a deep, funky groove.

Paul Woolford is back with another synthesizer workout titled *Emotional Violence* (2020 Vision). This one is not quite in the same vein as his over-the-top peak-time monster, "Erotic Discourse," but it's a thriller nonetheless. Anchored by a stabby, arpeggiated melody, the tune builds into a break of what sounds like a sampled loop of an oboe or some such instrument. How long before they start calling these techno-with-acoustic-instro tracks "house"?

Also on the synth-driven techno tip is *Remixes*, the latest EP from **Force of Nature** (Mule Musiq). This simply titled release features two Force of Nature tracks remixed by **Stefan Goldmann** and **Transmute**. Goldmann tries his hand at

"Sequencer," which he turns into a moody yet bouncy number. The stand-out cut, though, is Transmute's remix of "Still Going." Starting out with a schaffel rhythm, this track gets down to business quickly with squelchy synth stabs and reverbed claps galore. Very impressive.

Kiddaz.fm sub-label Micro.fon is back with yet another solid offering. This time it's the *Conscious Movement* EP from **Harada**, which incorporates a distinct reggae flavor. I can definitely see myself rocking this one early in the night to spark off a set. Includes remixes by **DJ Emerson** and some guy named **Marcus Meinhardt**. You need to find this! Also from the Kiddaz camp is **Harry Axt's** *Papageientaucher* EP, a warehouse banger that samples **ESG** almost unrecognizably.

In the "more bang for your buck" department, look out for **Ryoh Mitomi's** *Ballet* EP (Immigrant). You get a taste of Mitomi's diverse production talents here, as this EP features "Pointe," an upfront techno banger, and even some deep house on "Stranger Than Paradise." There's also a remix by **Polder**, and for you MP3Js out there, a digital-only remix of the same track by **A-Inc** to complete the package. You can't beat that for value!

Finally, it's another masterpiece from **Cobblestone Jazz** man **Mathew Jonson**. His latest is *Symphony for the Apocalypse* (Wagon Repair), whose title track is an extended jam that tells a foreboding tale, while "Twin Cobras" really sounds a bit like Jonson doing his take on Aphex Twin. Another brilliant effort from the Vancouver, BC bro.



Techno Guest Reviews:
Kate Simko

Being a native of Chicago, it probably didn't take long for producer/DJ Kate Simko to gravitate toward the house and techno sounds booming through town. Of course, it also didn't hurt that she spent her youth studying piano and music theory. Her classical training shines through on nearly everything she puts to wax, whether it be under her Detalles moniker (with Andres Bucci) or her own name. The synth and bass arrangements on "Osci," from the Spectral Sound compilation *Death Is Nothing to Fear*, burble and bob with just the right balance to keep things rhythmic for the dancefloor yet melodious for repeat headphone listens. Next up is Simko's *She Said* EP (Spectral Sound), an icier suite of film-noir tech that should do equally well in Chi-town's corridors. The Windy City gets a preview when Simko takes the reigns of Spectral's residency at Sonotheque's Wake Up! night on April 16, where she'll no doubt be picking through the stack below. *Ken Taylor*
katesimko.com

DOP

"THE LIGHTHOUSE"

ORAC/US/12

Breaking down musical boxes, Dop's quirky music videos and leftfield sound have a fresh, arty weirdness to them; they're not copying the fads. The French trio's relentless drums change subtly over time as vocals echo, eerie harmonies shift through space, and keyboards and horn parts showcase their sense for composition. Something like an Afro-Latin tribal recording gone mental—you gotta check this for yourself. *Kate Simko*

DASO AND PAWAS

"DET"

Spectral Sound/US/12

Cologne-based Daso and Pawas assembled quite the standout title song here. Daso teams up with classically trained tabla player Pawas, moving away from the more epic Daso sound to a classic, warm hit. The

song's melody gently threads through the percussion, with loosely layered claps, giving it house-y groove. The warm, pitch-bending chords remind me of Ricardo Villalobos' "Y.G.H." track from *Alcachofa*, which, after countless listens, should be happy to have a new, housier friend. *Kate Simko*

AGARIC

"THE DARK HOLDS THE SUN"

Sunset Discos/GER/12

Taking a darker turn, Mikael Stavöstrand's Sunset Discos label impresses once again with a deep, demented release by Swedish Berlin-transplant Agaric. Moving away from his harder techno roots, Agaric's explorations in the slower, funky side of techno come to full fruition here. This one enters a deeper space than the basic shminimal you-know-what. Remixes by Camea and Stavöstrand round out the EP with a tasteful, freaky vibe. *Kate Simko*

kode 9 vs. badawi "den of drumz"
b/w
juakali vs. badawi "crows"
limited edition 12" (uk import)

bad brains "bad brains"
now available on 180g vinyl as a
limited edition picture disc

essential dub
now available on cd & lp
the best say:
"...one juicy song after another"

other new roir titles:

CHECK OUT OUR ONLINE ONLY SALE AT ROIR-USA.COM!

PLAY LOUD!

ROIR

p.o. box 501, prince st. station, ny, ny 10012. tel: 212-477-0563. catalog@roir-usa.com. www.roir-usa.com.



Reggae Rewind By Ross Hogg

THE HEARSAY AND DOWNLOW ON DANCEHALL, DUB, ROOTS, AND LOVERS ROCK.



Big, big news in the world of Jamaican music: One of reggae's most important labels, **VP Records**, has made an offer to purchase its longtime rival **Greensleeves Records**. Brothers **Chris** and **Randy Chin**, VP's Chief Executive Officer and President, respectively, had this to say: "Although Greensleeves has historically been our competitor, we have always had the utmost respect for what Greensleeves stood for." They went on to add that they will "ensure that Greensleeves remains alive as a brand synonymous with excellence in reggae and dancehall music." Should be interesting to see what effect, if any, this merger will have on a notoriously decentralized genre.

And speaking of VP, they just released a new album by **Luciano**. *Jah Is My Navigator* is a long overdue return to form for reggae's messenger, whose recent full-length efforts have fallen short. On this disc, he teams with legendary producer and saxophonist **Dean Fraser** and even taps 2007 rookie of the year **Tarrus Riley**, who wrote the album's title track. His distinctive voice and uplifting lyrics sound right at home over the album's rootsy productions.

And has it really been 10 years since **Buju Banton** dropped his classic *Inna Heights*? I guess so, because a special 10th anniversary edition of said album just hit shelves via VP. The digitally remastered disc includes three previously unavailable tracks ("Bad Boy," "Politics Time Again," and "Situations" with **Morgan Heritage**) and a bonus DVD.

Producer **Supa Dups** (Black Chiney Records) is back with a full set of tunes on the Dr. Bird riddim, the backing track for recent hits by **Collie Buddz** ("Tomorrow's Another Day") and **Wayne Wonder** ("L.O.V.E."). The brace of one-drop tunes includes solid offerings from **T.O.K.**, **Nina Sky & Notch**, **Lindo P**, and **Richie Spice**.

And somehow, **Elephant Man** managed to conflate Roots and Culture with **Culture Club**. On "Calm Dem Down" (over the Drum Lane Riddim), Ele interpolates "Karma Chameleon"—and it works. (Maybe a little *too* well; I've been stuck on it for a week now.) The riddim also has standout tunes from **Serani** and a combination from **Tony Matterhorn** and **Fire Links**, a historic first, considering that the two spent years duking it out in bitterly contested soundclashes.

Stephen and **Damian Marley** keep it in the family on the moving title track to The Mission riddim (John John), a militaristic production with a powerful tune from **Mavado** ("On the Rock").

Mavado also appears on the new Gangsta Beat riddim (Pay Day Music), as does Alliance leader **Bounty Killer**, whose "Soldering" is the genre's finest sexual-metallurgical reference since **I-Roy** recorded "Welding" in 1975.

Bounty brings the entire Alliance into the studio with him for the posse cut (rare as hen's teeth in reggae); with "Deadly Alliance" (Big Ship), Mavado, **Busy Signal**, **Bling Dawg**, and **Wayne Marshall** prove themselves to be dancehall's most un-fade-able team. The track is produced by **Stephen "The Genius" McGregor**, top shotta at Big Ship Studios and one of the hottest producers in the game right now.

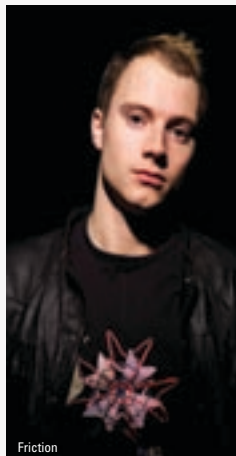
Meanwhile, the Big Ship camp continues to beef (on records only, thankfully) with its rival production camp, **Don Corleon**. One of Corleon's hottest artists, **Munga**, has a new track out, appropriately entitled "Auto-Tune," on which he disses Big Ship artists **Chino** and threatens to "mek Big Ship sink." Maybe they'll make nice and put out a double collaborative LP called *When Producers Attack*.

And finally, the new Journey Riddim (Danger Zone Records) is out with beautiful conscious tunes from **Morgan Heritage**, **Singer J**, **Anthony B**, **Ce'Cile**, and **Jah Cure**, whose massive 2007 hit "Sticky" was also produced by the folks at Danger Zone. Watch for this one to heat up rub-a-dub sessions at a dancehall near you.



Fast Forward By Method One

EXPLORING THE BOUNDARIES OF DRUM & BASS.



Other than an obvious level of quality, there's no overarching theme that ties together this month's drum & bass releases. So instead of trying to come up with a clever intro, I would rather jump directly into this month's notable tunes. Hang on!

With a release schedule that stretches back well over a decade, Vibe Recordings has long championed the deep drum & bass sound. For the first Vibe release of 2008, label head **Subject 13** presents a project based on the popular Acoustix event in London, a double CD entitled—appropriately—*Acoustix Live*. Featuring both an unmixed disc of exclusives plus a blinding DJ set by Subject 13 and **MC System**, this compilation offers tunes from a wide range of artists like **Seba**, **ASC**, **Stunna & Pipeline**, **ICR**, **Future Engineers**, and many more (including, for full disclosure, some dude named **Method One**. Just ignore that guy!).

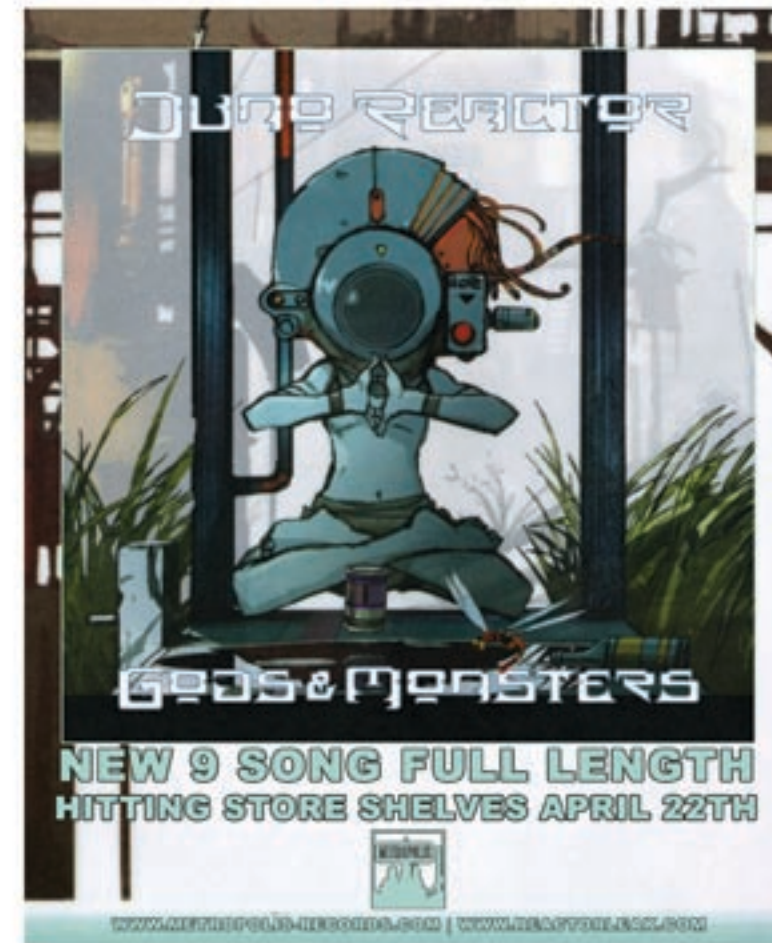
Speaking of ICR, I have to give some love to his newest release on Red Mist Recordings, a groovy little number entitled "Overtime." Uplifting, and with a vaguely indie-rock feel, this is a tune that manages to sound unique and fresh while staying close to established drum & bass formulas. Newcomer **Well Being** takes the flipside with the darker "Love & Sorrow," which combines lush synths with a growling bassline and loads of little technical details.

For those of you who like your beats hard and technical, there are a bunch of new releases that are sure to scratch your itch. Let's start with "Altitude," a true classic by **Stakka and Skynet and Friction** that was one of the best tunes of 2001. So what does an old tune have to do with new releases? That question is answered with two brand-new remixes on Friction's Shogun Audio label. Man-of-the-moment **Break** takes the reins of the first remix, giving the tune a much harder and stripped-down direction that will punish your speaker cones. The second remix comes from the all-star pairing of **Dom and Gridlok**, who keep true to the trance-y nature of the original while giving it a modern polish.

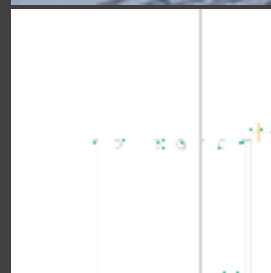
New Zealand's **State of Mind** has been going from strength to strength lately, with pretty much every release a must-buy. The newest from their SOM Music label looks to continue that trend. "Hoodoo" and "Flawless" both feature a collaborative assist from **Chris Su**, so you know what to expect—deep, tech-y drum & bass that smashes up the dancefloor yet retains a surprising sense of subtlety.

There are plenty of great producers in drum & bass, but relatively few that can take the basic elements of the genre and make them sound fresh and new again. With the new *My Lightyear* EP (Black Sun Empire Recordings), **Telemetrik** makes a strong case for his inclusion in that list. While all four tunes fall under the general tech-y-dancefloor heading, it's the details that stand out. Expect the unexpected!

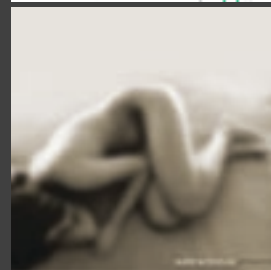
Finally, **Marcus Intalex's** Soul:R label returns for 2008 with a double-pack featuring **Alix Perez** and **Lynx**. Chilled-out jazzy and dubby grooves are the order of the day here in yet another quality release. Fans of digital releases should also check out the new site abunchofcuts.com, a new MP3 download store that features the exclusive catalogs of Soul:R, Signature, Commercial Suicide, Exit, 31 Recordings, and DAT:Music. Get your credit cards ready!



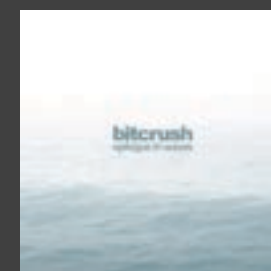
near the parenthesis
of soft construction
compact disc / download



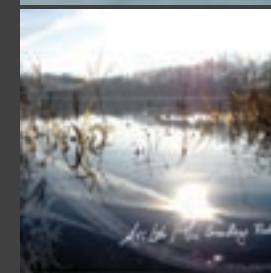
hologram
hologram+
compact disc / download



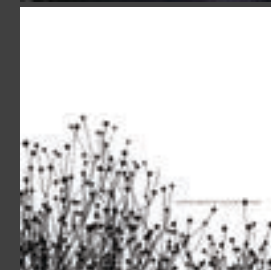
subtractiveLAD
apparatus
compact disc / download
+
decay as a lifestyle
download ep



bitcrush
epilogue in waves
compact disc / download



arc lab
the goodbye radio
compact disc / download



another electronic musician
seed
download ep



Lucky 13
By Toph One

TophOne spins weekly at the RedWine Social, White Label, Saints & Sinners, and Funkside in San Francisco



Morganics (Photo by Baba Israel)



Akrobatik

It never ceases to amaze me when people are ceaselessly amazed by my lack of a cell phone or other millennial devices. It's like when fools think they need lame-ass bike gear to ride a fucking bike. We have survived for thousands of years without all this crap and are better off without all the plastic garbage. Luddites rule. Lots of great tunes so let's get right to it.

1. THE BAMBOOS
"BRING IT HOME FEAT. ALICE RUSSELL (LANU MIX)"

Tru Thoughts/UK/12
Sure, I've got a crush on Alice Russell, but now I gotta be in love with the Bamboos, too? Lanu brings the barefoot shuffle on this spring-time heater, with Ms. Russell in top form. Have you heard "What We Want" yet? Good lord, the gal has pipes.

2. TOP'R THE MARATHON OF SHAME
Zero Friends-Gurp City/US/CD

If he hasn't slept on your couch or tagged your bathroom, chances are he's snaked your beer at the corner bar. God protects drunks and children, and while wealth has eluded him, my man Top'R has been blessed with the storytelling abilities of a wise old hobo, coupled with the audacity and bravado of a true old-school San Francisco *paisano*. Dick Nasty shines on production, with tracks like "Why?" and "Grindhouse." Top has his finest release to date.

3. NUBLU ORCHESTRA
"SKETCHES OF NYC (UR SEVENTH TUNNEL REMIX)"

Nublu/US/12
It's been quite a while since straight-up house music has moved me like this Underground Resistance track does, and then Nublu goes and puts out another lovely 12" from Wax Poetic ("Changir") as well. You gotta love that label.

4. MORGANICS HIP HOP IS MY PASSPORT
Invisible Forces/AUST/CD

Most folks who travel around the world and make music are horrible, pretentious neo-hippies bent on their own glory and the justification of their lame beat-making capabilities. Not my man from the MetaBass crew. Not only does he come through but he's a fucking wizard behind the boards. (Check him and the Wilcannia Mob on M.I.A.'s *Kala*.)

5. JET BLACK CRAYON IN THE INTERIM
Function8/US/CD-DVD

"Lost in the Fog" could possibly be the most perfect portrait of San Francisco in under three minutes ever made. Bicycles, Tecate, skateboards, and graffiti... What's not to love?

6. KING MOST REMIXES
white label/US/12

That young kid from San Mateo comes correct with this 12" heater. Latin funk meets Masta Ace on side one, but it's the house-y version of Common's "Go" that really shines. Fuck genres—rock it all.

7. AKROBATIK ABSOLUTE VALUE
Fat Beats/US/CD

I'll be serious. Most indie hip-hop bores me to tears. Lackluster beats and pissy, introspective lyrics just don't hold a candle to the hood shit that I've been raised on. But along comes this cat from Boston, and life is good again. Feel the real boom-bap on tracks like "Step It Up" and "Be Prepared," the latter produced by 9th Wonder and featuring Little Brother.

8. GRAND INVINCIBLE ASK THE DUST
Gurp City/US/CD

This would be Luke Sick (of Sacred Hoop) at his dusted, drink-infused best, rapping about the exquisiteness of everyday life on Planet Gurp. DJ Eons on the cuts. Gurp = good.

9. SON OF SOUND TRIAL BY FIRE EP
Speak/US/12EP

Henry Maldonado brings the heavy disco funk for that *laaaaaate*-night basement jam with one red light and a single nasty bathroom that you'll wait far too long in line for just to do a bump of bad coke and maybe get a blowjob.

10. COOL NUTZ KING COOL NUTZ
Jus Family/US/CD

If I could be more on Portland's dick, I'd like you to tell me how. I actually don't love all of this guy's stuff, but turf shit like "Bring It Back" more than proves his worth. Why hasn't he hooked up with Eddie K for a stugged-out West Coast spectacular?

11. MEGAPHONE "MEGAPHONE"
NatAural High/US/12

It's always notable when someone's side-project eclipses his original group, but Crown City Rockers' Moe Pope and Headnodic bring the heat for their new release. Twenty tracks is a bit much, but when "Burning Bridges/Therapy" breaks down in mid-tune, you'll be thankful.

12. ESTELLE "AMERICAN BOY"
Home School/US/12

Man, you might as well call ahead and book yourself a suite at The Endup for Sunday afternoons when this lil' beauty comes on. Estelle's breathy vocals pair up lovely with Kanye's uptown raps for a hot Sunday joint.

LUCKY 13) REZ ROCKET
US/clothing line

My man Eyeris cooks up the tasty designs for flyers, t-shirts, and walls, and bigs up the Hopi Nation along the way. Track it down.

In Stores Now!

New album featuring:

- Mike Ladd
- Celena Glenn
- Invincible
- Spleen
- Deantoni Parks
- Adam Deitch

Includes the track "The Hook" now available for download on XLR8R.com

GRAND PIANORAMAX



THE BIGGEST PIANO IN TOWN

OBLIQ SOUND™

www.obliqsound.com

"Determinedly hip ... you will be hanging their picture on your wall." – NME
"Ace newcomers." - TIME OUT LONDON
"Love it!" – DJ MAGAZINE

The Debut Album

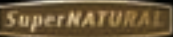
www.temposhark.com
www.myspace.com/temposhark

PAPER + GLUE

Fantom G



REACHING NEW LEVELS OF POWER AND CREATIVITY

- Extra-large 8.5" wide TFT color LCD with mouse connectivity
- New onboard audio/MIDI sequencer with 128 tracks, including 24 audio tracks
- Multi-FX for each part — program up to 22 effects routings at once and polish songs with onboard mastering effects
- Advanced sound engine with double wave capacity of Roland's legacy workstations
- Expand the capabilities with Roland's new ARX expansion featuring SuperNATURAL™ — the world's greatest performance-expression technology 



Top-of-the-line keyboard action; weighted PHA "Ivory Feel" keyboard (Fantom-G8 only)



Live Mode: Layer and split up to 8 parts with seamless patch and effects switching



Studio Mode: 16-part multi-timbral mode with up to 22 simultaneous effects



ARX-01 Drum Expansion (Sold Separately)



ARX-02 Electric Piano Expansion (Sold Separately)



To see and hear the new Fantom-G in action, visit www.RolandUS.com/FantomG





IN THE STUDIO: BOGDAN RACZYNSKI

A REPHLEX MAINSTAY COOKS UP DRILL 'N' BASS POP MAYHEM WITH THE SIMPLEST OF TECHNIQUES.

WORDS: CAMERON MACDONALD PHOTO: MAY TRUONG

When an artist compares making rhythms to cooking beef-stock cubes, it's a surefire sign to not take his music too seriously. And that's exactly producer Bogdan Raczynski's charm. On his latest album, *Alright!*, he cross-breeds gabber, drill 'n' bass, and breakcore into a caffeinated, constantly mutating strain of electro-pop. The Polish-born Canadian has been a longtime regular on the Replex label, and his work has even attracted Icelandic pop icon Björk, who collaborated with him on the 2005 single "Who Is It?" Unlike many bedroom studio artists who've passed through our In the Studio feature, Raczynski keeps his gear very simple: Just a worn-out laptop and headphones. *XLBR* probed him about his studio (or lack thereof), his production techniques, and his new album.

XLBR: IF I WALKED INTO YOUR STUDIO, WHAT WOULD I SEE?

Bogdan Raczynski: I use a dead-tired laptop [Fujitsu Lifebook T2010] and a pair of clunky headphones. Typically, you can find me in the kitchen, as I'm always working on new recipes. I don't have a studio per se.

WHAT'S YOUR SECRET WEAPON?

My tea kettle. My special boiled-water-and-honey combo in the morning revs me up and warms me up so I can let my mind wander.

ARE THERE ANY NEW STUDIO TECHNIQUES AND GEAR THAT YOU USED ON *ALRIGHT!*?

With each successive album my process and technique gets simpler and simpler. I spend less time looking for samples and more time just trying to please my mind. Ultimately, that's what my music boils down to: enjoying myself. On earlier releases, I would actually hunt down samples, sample my own sounds, use software synths to make sounds, filter, etcetera. Now I just use stock sounds. I have my five to six trusted spices and a variety of ingredients that I use on a regular basis and I stick to them.

DO YOU USUALLY STICK TO A FEW PARTICULAR SYNTH MODELS FOR PERFORMING YOUR SONGS' LEAD MELODIES?

Absolutely. I don't muck about too much. If it pleases my ear, I go with it. I'm not interested in focusing on finding weird sounds because I don't want people to focus on the technique of the music; I want them to just enjoy the music very immediately. It's like food or anything else sensually pleasurable—the more you think about it or are taken back into reality, the less sensual or pleasurable that thing is.

DID A LOT OF DSP WORK GO INTO *ALRIGHT!*? DO YOU PROGRAM YOUR SYNTH PATCHES FROM SCRATCH?

Not at all. I'm an absolute technical dunce. I'd fail any music-

technology tests. I don't explore techniques or technology. But I can rock the rave like you wouldn't believe.

DO YOU USUALLY MIX TRACKS USING HEADPHONES OR DO YOU PREFER LISTENING TO THE MONITORS?

I try to mix with the most absolute shit set-up I can find, because when I was growing up I didn't have the best amount of cash for speakers in my car or home. I want it to sound proper on any crap set-up.

WHAT ARE SOME "SHIT SET-UPS" YOU'VE MIXED WITH IN THE PAST?

The first tracker [an old form of sample-based music software, in which a typing keyboard is used for notation] I composed with was absolute dog shit. Rather than the standard vertical grid, it was notation-based. So you were able to load in whatever samples you wanted but had to plonk down actual notes on a scale and work out tracks that way. It was a nightmare and everything sounded as such. But it's hard to complain *too* much with freeware. It's like saying I hated that I had access to cheap noodles when I was borderline broke and starving.

WHAT ADVANTAGE IS THERE TO STICKING WITH A SIMPLE LAPTOP AS OPPOSED TO WORKING IN A FULL STUDIO?

I think most people mistakenly feel that they need more gear or software to complete their sound. They're constantly damning their own music because, "Oh, if they only had this expensive plug-in or mixer or..." It's like saying you need a professional kitchen with all the latest copper pans and expensive Japanese knives in order to make a family-pleasing dish. The truth is that simple is always better.

DO YOU PREFER SOFTWARE SYNTHS OR HARDWARE SYNTHS?

I'm strictly software. I find hardware to be too time-consuming. I can't dedicate the time to tweak knobs and play with wires when my delicate stock is simmering away in the kitchen. One minute too long and your stock pot is burnt on the bottom and you have to start over.

BEATWISE, HOW DID YOU CREATE THE RHYTHMS FOR YOUR NEW RECORD?

Sometimes, I make my own stock; sometimes I use stock cubes. But only the organic stock cubes—the other ones have *way* too much sodium.

Bogdan Raczynski's *Alright!* is out now on Replex. bogdanraczynski.com





ARTIST TIPS: EVOL INTENT

Sure, everyone's been wowed by Propellerhead Reason's re-view: all simulated dangling patch cords that allow you to mix and match instruments, samplers, and EQs to your heart's content. But there's much more going on inside this fantastic all-in-one virtual workstation. Atlanta-based IDM/drum & bass heads Evol Intent, whose latest album, *Era of Diversion* (System), utilizes much of Reason's deep capabilities, are superstars when it comes to pushing its limits. Here members Gigantor, Knick, and the Enemy tell us about their five favorite features in Reason 4.0. *Derek Grey*

evolintent.com, propellerheads.se

NN-XT SAMPLER AND DRUMS

The NN-XT sampler is excellent for making absolutely crushing drums. Our NN-XT drum technique is to load a REX drum loop into the sampler, and overlay kicks and snares with secondary drum hits to emphasize and power-up the original loop's kick and snare. Since the NN-XT has multiple outs, we take the overlaid drum hits out on separate channels. If the main drums are on the NN-XT outs 1/2, we put our overlay kick on outs 3/4 and the overlay snare on outs 5/6, then route the hits to their own EQing/processing.

SCREAM 4 DISTORTION BOX

We use the Scream box's tape mode to death, which adds some very convincing phatness to almost any sound. Taking our drum example from above, we route our main loop, kick, and snare into their own scream boxes, and give everything a little analog punch and grit. The Scream is also fun when it comes to processing bass sounds and synths to put them a bit more "in the pocket." Hit a filtered synth through the Scream on some intense settings and have fun!

MCLASS EFFECTS

The MClass effects were a necessary upgrade with Reason 3.0. The compressor adds sidechain capabilities, keeping drums punchy and more in the mix when faced with mastering through brickwall limiters. Also, the MClass Maximizer is a great plug-in for pushing a sound's perceived volume. We like the "soft clip" mode. (Experiment with it while turning up the output.) The Stereo Imager is great for working with anything that goes to vinyl. You can effectively "mono out" bass frequencies, and avoid murdering your pressing. The MClass EQ is a great addition, too, especially for "pulling" frequencies (taking away sound via turning down unwanted frequencies).

SEQUENCER

The new sequencer might be a bit confusing if you're a Reason veteran, but after getting acquainted with 4.0 it becomes much faster and more convenient than the original sequencer, especially when using key commands. Here are some features we like: control your cursor selector through the QWERTY keys; option-click on the knob or slider you want to automate, make a clip, and automate away; hit shift-tab to pull up your piano-roll view on your currently selected sequencer item. Dig into your manual or read up online to find out more and improve your workflow.

COMBINATOR

This is an awesome device that's rather unique to Reason. It lets you stack any other devices or effects together, and control them from one sequencer item. Instead of stacking MIDI events in the sequencer and devices, you can keep everything on Combinator to design your sound. We've found the Combinator to be great for making insane synths, basses, and effects. The Combinator can also be quite useful for making "mini-templates" to insert on a song, and to do this you may "uncombine" the device inside your track. We use this often with mixer templates.



RESPECTWORLDWIDE SCRATCHLIVE

ROCK SOLID DJ SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE. FREEDOM TO HAVE YOUR ENTIRE COLLECTION AT YOUR FINGER TIPS. MIX WITH REAL DECKS. THE TOOL REAL DJS TRUST.

Z TRIP • DJ AM • ROB SWIFT • RONI SIZE • DJ RIZ • DJ VADIM • DJ HAUL & MASON • JOHN TEJADA • JAZZY JEFF • DJ BIG WIZ • A-TRAK • A-SIDES • JAZZY JAY



WWW.SCRATCHLIVE.NET
RANE CORPORATION - USA - 425-355-6000 - WWW.RANE.COM



GETTIN' IT ON

YAMAHA TENORI-ON VISUAL MUSIC INTERFACE

Yamaha's Tenori-on is the closest you can come to playing music with pixels. You'll pay a hefty price for entry, and we do have some beef with the machine's construction, but it's a ridiculously fun toy if you've got the cash. Essentially a 16x16 grid of LED switches housed inside a magnesium frame, Tenori-on is truly an electronic instrument: Everything you need is housed within the hardware, from sound creation to sequencing, while two built-in speakers on the top of frame allow for pick-up-and-play ease. There's an LCD at the bottom of the frame for playing with settings, and by using the connection function, it's possible to play a synchronized session with two of the devices.

While this may sound like fairly standard-issue stuff, it's all in the execution: Tenori-on brilliantly demonstrates how visuals and sound can interact within a simplified, intuitive human interface. The results are often mesmerizing. Expect to sit around for hours on end watching the pixelated lightshow as you create songs with buttons. There are plenty of amazing design touches worked into the OS, not the least of

which is a clever key/scale system, which makes entering notes incredibly easy. The sound selection is more hit than miss (especially if you like the *Pac Man* approach), and in general it's a very warm, musical device. Making music really does feel like playing a videogame—in a good way.

While there's no doubt genius in the conception, production values are a bit underwhelming: The speaker is weak, the construction is plastic-y, and the lack of a rechargeable NiCad battery is disappointing (it uses six standard AA batteries instead). The only audio port is a 1/8" out (meant for headphones). So for a \$1200 device—even at such a limited run—it's just not of the build and feature quality we'd expect. Still, it's an awesome toy if you've got the dough (and live in the U.K.—we've got the only one in the US at the moment).

Evan Shamoon

MSRP: \$1200; yamaha.com



IMAGE-LINE DECKADANCE DJ SOFTWARE

Image-Line, the creators of FL Studio, took it upon themselves to create a better DJ program—and, to a large degree, they've succeeded. For one thing, it's universal: Deckadance works with nearly every MIDI controller and timecode-vinyl system available (Final Scratch, Serato, Ms. Pinky, etc.). It can host any VST effect or soft synth (big bonus), and can actually be used as a VST itself inside your DAW, giving you the ability to easily control your music files and play them like instruments. **The interface and sound quality are fantastic**, with some nice bundled effects and onboard EQ. You can even control DMX-supported lighting equipment like strobes and smoke machines, if that's how you do. *Evan Shamoon*

MSRP: \$99 (House Edition), \$179 (Club Edition); deckadance.com



KORG ZERO8 CONTROL SURFACE

Supporting up to 24-bit/192-kHz audio and as much adaptability as a MIDI-minded DJ/performer musters, the eight-channel Zero8 "instrument" aims to be the disco ball of the sound booth. It's a multi-input centerpiece with XLR/balanced TRS and digital outputs reflecting and refracting sound's infinite hues from appropriately saturated sources. And that material can come from ultra-low impedance mic preamps, phono/CD/line, quarter-inch guitar jacks or a FireWire interface coupled with Live, Traktor Scratch, Logic Studio, and more—in-the-box, where the frequency response/potential shines brightest. Hybrid channels switch from audio to MIDI control strips, allowing map-able push/pot triggers. Stereo expression is assisted by multiple selectable EQ curves/filters, A/B and SOLO/CUT toggles, as well as a somewhat tight KAOSS Pad-style touchscreen for built-in BPM-synced insert/master FX control. Latency, routing quirks, and a lack of per-channel outputs prevent the Zero8 from being a project studio's live-recording console, but **the intuitively integrated unit more than achieves its intentions as a preeminent live-control mixer**. *Tony Ware*

MSRP: \$2450; korg.com

"All of Torq software's diverse, built-in features—like the assortment of FX and amazing time-stretching—give me endless creative juice to produce unique music."

— urthWORM (DJ/Producer; Elsewhere, Free the Robots)

A CREATIVE REVOLUTION



Torq Xponent



X-Session Pro



Torq Conectiv

As advancements in digital technology continue to propel the evolution of the DJ, only one application gives trendsetting artists like Free the Robots the creative tools they need to explore new musical territory. In addition to essential cueing, beat-matching and mixing, Torq goes beyond all other DJ applications by offering a host of real-time creative options unavailable anywhere else. M-Audio designed Torq to easily transition today's diverse DJ into the world of production—delivering complete solutions that fulfill the needs of every DJ.

- **integrated hardware/software systems**
intuitive operation and rock-solid dependability
- **includes ten built-in effects and support for VSTs**
add a new dimension to your style
- **16-cell tempo-synced sampler**
trigger loops and samples on the fly
- **advanced time stretching and Tempo Anchors**
stay in sync even if the song changes tempo

© 2008 Avid Technology, Inc. All rights reserved. Avid, M-Audio, the "M" logo, Torq, Xponent, X-Session and Conectiv are either trademarks or registered trademarks of Avid Technology, Inc. All other trademarks contained herein are the property of their respective owners. Product features, specifications, system requirements and availability are subject to change without notice.



TANNOY I30 IPOD SPEAKER SYSTEM

Long renowned for their studio monitors, British speaker king Tannoy enters the consumer-electronics ring with the i30, a basic, but heavy-duty, iPod-docking speaker system with USB and video connectivity. What's immediately striking about the i30 is its high design: **its sleek, black-plastic casing and super-sturdy construction make it a winner from the moment it leaves the box.** But when put to the test, it handles quite nicely on the sound end, too. With high-quality MP3s, the output is solid. The i30 seems to have a little trouble reproducing crisp highs, but the lows boom nicely—more so than on similar docks. The only problem is that those bass frequencies can get a bit crushed on poorly encoded music; as with Tannoy's studio monitors, the low-end almost over-compensates. *Ken Taylor*
MSRP: \$399; tannoy-speakers.com



EAST WEST QUANTUM LEAP GOLIATH VIRTUAL SYNTHESIZER

It's no secret that many producers tire quickly of their preferred software's presets and pricey plug-ins, but even the most frantic sound shapers will have their work cut out for them with East West's Quantum Leap Goliath instrument collection. **This VST polymath is equipped with over 8GB of instruments** and patches, ranging from acoustic and electric pianos to guitars and basses to the ever-impressive new-age ensembles and ethnic instruments—not to mention an arsenal of percussion and synth possibilities. Goliath is also armed with a Play sample engine, allowing users to open multiple instruments at once without slowing down processing power. While it may be cheaper to go out and buy a particular library or specific soft synth, any composer from nearly every genre will find Goliath's offerings nearly inexhaustible. *Fred Miketa*
MSRP: \$495; eastwestsamples.com



IZOTOPE RX AUDIO RESTORATION SOFTWARE

Let's say you're in the middle of a session with a talented vocalist: halfway through take three, the mic cable goes "pop," but the performance has that one-of-a-kind magic that you don't want to lose. Or maybe you've got an ancient breakbeat that would absolutely rock if it weren't for all the vinyl crackles, or some film dialogue that has just a bit too much background noise. Regardless of the situation, anyone that records or produces audio of any kind knows how important it is to be able to rescue certain files. That's where Izotope RX comes in—featuring frequency-specific noise removal, click and pop repair, and even an innovative peak-rebuilding function that can fix brickwall-clipped audio, it is truly an indispensable tool. **The sound quality is top-notch, but RX is surprisingly affordable**—you need never sacrifice that near-perfect take again. *Alexander Possell*
MSRP: \$279; izotope.com



M-AUDIO STUDIOPHILE Q40 HEADPHONES

With a pair of massive 40mm drivers that yield a whopping 10Hz to 20kHz frequency range, M-Audio's top-quality Studiophile Q40 headphones offer exceptional detail, and can help anyone generate precision mixes in a crystal-clear listening environment. **The closed back circum-aural design eliminates outside noise while isolating the sounds necessary to complete your mix.** One of the finer points of this pair is that the audio cord is detachable, allowing you to avoid the number one problem with headphones: time-weathered broken internal connections. At \$179, they're obviously a great value, and the sound quality is equally impressive, suiting home-studio guys and pro environments alike. *Praxis*
MSRP: \$179; m-audio.com

Make room for version 4



Reason Version 4 The bigger rack.

We know. It just doesn't add up. How can the world's mightiest and most modular synth, a fresh sequencer, a revolutionary groove tool and a stunning arpeggiator unit all fit into your smooth, streamlined Reason rack? It's easy, they can't. That's why we made Reason rack version 4, the bigger rack. Big enough to house a stunning set of new features and devices, your new Reason rack will not only inspire you into making great music, it will provide you with whole new ways of making it.

propellerhead

LINE 6 www.line6.com/reason

www.propellerheads.se/reason

HOME BASE

PlayStation Home takes living in an immaterial world one step further.

WORDS RYAN RAYHILL



Home Sports Lobby



Home Theater

In 1982, *Tron* posited the wild idea of humans zapping their psyches into a digital realm, which allowed them to roam inside a virtual world, ride around on sweet motorcycles, and “de-rez” (read: kill) each other with DayGlo frisbees. A bit ahead of its time, this romantic, Atari 2600-inspired dream’s lasting appeal only really tickled the fancy of a relatively small cult of sci-fi fans and proverbial basement-dwelling computer hackers.

Fast-forward to today and massive multi-player online (MMO) titles like *World of Warcraft* (10 million registered accounts) and *Second Life* (20 million registered accounts) have thrust this once fantastical idea of personalized characters running roughshod over digital environments not only into the lives of hardcore gamers, but also those of soccer moms, priests, and CEOs.

Despite few MMO games appearing on consoles, the wide appeal—and more importantly, money—that these virtual communities garner is not lost on console manufacturers, least of all Sony—this spring the electronics giant prepares *PlayStation Home* for the PlayStation 3. Combining stylistic elements of successful online works like *The Sims* and *Second Life* with those of community-based websites like MySpace or Facebook (with a dash of Xbox Live), *PlayStation Home* has managed to create its own online vibe like nothing else on home consoles to date.

A free download, *Home* allows PS3 owners the opportunity to create their own “space” in a 3-D utopia that’s buzzing with all manner of consumer-based activity. After creating your own customizable avatar, users can begin exploring and interacting with the world around them. You can voice- or text-chat with other users, get low in the local dance club,

hustle fools at an ersatz pool hall, watch movie trailers in a virtual theater, visit a trophy room that trumpets the in-game achievements of *Home* users, or simply soak in the idyllic vistas that surround you and your new friends.

One notable feature of *Home* is that it allows users to continually personalize their own little (or big, depending on how things go for you) online residence with any number of items, such as art or furniture that can be bought or otherwise obtained within the world; Sony will eventually provide users the tools to create their own items (which can then be sold for real money using an auction system). Once in your apartment, other users can pay you a visit and trade media—from music to images to game data—with you, should you choose to do so.

As the service is free to users, advertising will, for better or worse, be a part of *Home*, with Sony encouraging retailers to create their own areas within the world as well as enabling them to stream dynamic ads targeted to particular users based on their gaming habits. While this may seem suspect on the surface, it allows for potentially interesting promotional events such as contests, sponsored concerts, or first-look video premiers exclusively for *Home* users.

With most of the major movie studios, retailers, and even Netflix committing to Sony’s proprietary Blu-ray format (the PS3 is still the cheapest Blu-ray player on the market), the advent of *Home*, which will constantly be augmented and tweaked, could finally launch the PS3 closer to the level of virtual awesomeness *Tron* predicted 26 years ago—without the “de-rezzing,” of course.

BEST OF THE REST

Three other virtual places to put your feet up—amongst other things.

VLES

For those not content with actually living, visiting, or puking within the confines of New York’s real Lower East Side, MTV and *VICE Magazine* bring would-be hipsters a chance to try before they buy—or more likely rent—with *Virtual Lower East Side*. With representations of many (not all) seedy NYC establishments, you too can be a part of NYC’s best-kept secret! Oh wait... vles.com

HABITAT

Okay, this one doesn’t actually exist anymore, but it’s worth a mention as it is widely considered to be the first online game, and the one whose technology spurred the entire movement. Developed by LucasFilm (now LucasArts) in 1986 for the Commodore 64, *Habitat* allowed users to barter for materials, and even murder for them, which prompted the community to create their own laws before shutting down in 1988.

RED LIGHT CENTER

Modeled after Amsterdam’s Red Light District, *Red Light Center* encourages you to “live your fantasy” (or “bang,” as it’s also known) in a bevy of nightclubs, hotels, and bars. With over 700,000 users currently, all RLC avatars are anatomically correct and can smoke weed. What else do you need to know? redlightcenter.com

MUTEK ELECTRONIC MUSIC AND DIGITAL CREATIVITY FESTIVAL.
 9TH EDITION | MONTREAL, CANADA | MAY 28 - JUNE 1 | 2008

PERFORMANCES AND CONCERTS | PANELS AND WORKSHOPS | FEATURING ARTISTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

Past performers include:

Akufen	Guido Schneider	Matthew Herbert	Richie Hawtin
Audio Werner	Jan Jelinek	Modeselektor	Schneider TM
Carsten Nicolai	Jamie Lidell	Monolake	Wighnomy Brothers
Cobblestone Jazz	Kode 9	Murcof	
Deadbeat	Luciano	Pole	
Gui Boratto	Matthew Dear	Ricardo Villalobos	And many others!

Advanced Line-Up and Festival Passes Available on MUTEK.ORG Starting March 18!



loading...

XLR8R picks the hottest videogames and gear of the month.

WORDS: RYAN RAYHILL



Ah, spring! Pollen-induced allergies, mosquito swarms, and braless hipsters are just around the corner! Yay! But let us not forget those wonderful games that stick with us all year round. Chekkitt!

If you have ever thought about owning a PSP, now would be a good time to snag one, as **God of War: Chains of Olympus** (Sony, PSP) has arrived. The story of fallen badass Greek warrior, Kratos (on the PS2), managed to deliver more "wow" moments per square inch than a preacher at a pole-dancing contest, and **Chains** more than lives up to that pedigree with the best looking and bloodiest action experience on the portable machine yet.

Dark Sector (D3 Publisher; Xbox 360, PS3) follows a shady "problem solver" in the employ of the CIA who suddenly finds himself exposed to mysterious bio-compounds that, naturally, allow him to morph his body to fit various combat situations while battling experimental abominations. The protagonist, Hayden-voiced by Michael Rosenbaum (*Smallville's* Lex Luthor)—suffers congenital analgia, a real-life condition that does not allow its victims to feel pain, which makes kicking ass that much more satisfying. And sad.

As the second foray into terrorist-occupied Las Vegas, **Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Vegas 2** (Ubisoft; Xbox 360, PS3) makes veneer disease and bankruptcy look like the least of your worries in Sin City as you guide your squad of special-ops soldiers through a lab-

rinth of slots and green felt tables (in solo and multi-player modes) to take out extremist jerks who hate freedom... and free buffets.

With a soundtrack created by famed hip-hop producer Just Blaze and commentary by the one and only Chuck D, **NBA Ballers: Chosen One** (Midway; Xbox 360, PS3) isn't a by-the-numbers basketball title. **Chosen One** not only lets you create your own NBA court-monger, it lets you get loose with over-the-top super-moves, performing crazy dunks on living legends like Shaq and Kobe. Wild.

Perhaps the most popular driving series of all time (though we still love *RC Pro-Am*), **Gran Turismo** returns this month with **Gran Turismo 5: Prologue** (Sony, PS3). Priding itself on realism over arcade-style action, **Prologue** features photo-accurate depictions of over 40 real-world rides and 10 circuits that are sure to keep grease monkeys everywhere revved up.

Though it came out 11 years ago, **Final Fantasy VII** continues to excite RPG fans as though it were brand-effin' new. So it should please old-school enthusiasts that **Final Fantasy VII: Crisis Core** (Square Enix; PSP) not only extends the old game's lore with new characters and gameplay, but also features several classic characters and locations. And yes, Aerith, the tear-jerking martyr of *VII* is still alive here. Give it up for broken timelines!

Before the megaton bomb of **Metal Gear 4** hits later this year on the PS3, Hideo Kojima would like to re-introduce you to his main man

of the past decade, Solid Snake. **Metal Gear Solid: Essential Collection** (Konami; PS2) takes three of the most successful stealth-action games ever (*Metal Gear Solid 1* through *3*) and serves them to you on a silver platter with all manner of espionage-y extras. Enjoy.

On many critics' Game of the Year lists, though woefully under-appreciated by the public, was 2006's **Okami** for the PS2. Taking on a unique Japanese woodblock-print style, **Okami** (Capcom; Wii) follows a wolf-god on the hunt for demon that has cursed the land. The innovative title, which incorporates *sumi-e* brushwork, gets a fitting second chance at success this month on Nintendo's popular console. Do yourself a favor and pick up this unforgettable adventure title.

People who love mobile gaming are a masochistic lot, as the controls for most cell-phone games are clunky at best and it's near impossible to pull off moves admirably. However, if you are one of these cursed bunch, your time has come. The **Zeemote**, developed by the same doctor who helped create the first force-feedback controllers for PC games, uses a compact, wireless Bluetooth controller to help you overcome number-pad handicaps, so you can rule at *Diner Dash*, *Petz*, or whatever your mobile steez may be. Check it at zeemote.com

1. RAINBOW SIX: VEGAS 2
2. METAL GEAR SOLID
3. FINAL FANTASY VII: CRISIS CORE
4. GRAN TURISMO 5

 Catch the weekly Loading... column at XLR8R.com/news.

From ibiza to the world... all the best dance music!!



now online!
www.ibizadanceclub.com

LAUNCH PROMOTION
2x1
get a remix for free with every download!

ibiza dance club.com:
The best online shop for DJs:

All the labels, all the best tunes
all the tracks with all the mixes
by **THE BEST DJs AND PRODUCERS
IN THE WORLD**, available for your
set with only one click

Be part of this big community of DJs!

The best priced digital tracks!

ibiza dance club powered by 

ibiza dance club recommended by the worlds best DJs!:

"Simply Good"
Milk & Sugar

"It's great to be a part of
Spain's first dedicated Dance
download site"
Cicada

"www.ibizadanceclub.com is without
a doubt the best way to access Ibiza's
musical reality on the web"
Claudio Coccoluto



VIS-ED CHRIS DUNCAN

From punk rocker to DIY mystic, this Oakland artist moves fluidly between the concrete and the abstract.

LEFT:
Chris Duncan exclusive
for XLR8R Vis-Ed, 2008

“I have fallen into everything I have ever done,” states 34-year-old Chris Duncan, who moved to the West Coast on a whim some years ago from his native New Jersey. Landing in Oakland, via a stint on the Tahoe slopes, this punk rock die-hard proceeded to get mystical,

creating an organic body of work where wood putty, paint, lines of pencil and string, and pink tape converge into cosmic transmissions that suggest clues to the mysteries of the universe.

Though pieces have titles like “The Mess We’ve Made and the Year It Took to Clean Up” and “The Great Unraveling-American History,” they’re the only thing clear about this abstract art, which takes into account Joseph Albers’ color theory and places emphasis on laying bare the art-making process (via exposed threads, ghost lines, and the like).

On the flip side, Duncan does quite a few things that are very concrete. Since 2002, he has been producing the ‘zine *Hot & Cold* with Griffin McPartland. Each issue features contributions from 20 artists and is limited to 150 copies; the ninth installment will be released on May 9 at a group show at San Francisco’s Luggage Store Gallery. He’s also the editor of *My First Time: A Collection of First Punk Show Stories*, which was released by AK Press last August.

We caught up with Duncan at home in Oakland and engaged in a heady conversation about Daniel Higgs, string, and sacred geometry.

hotandcoldmassive.com



ABOVE:
Moment Monument,
2006 (wood, string,
paint, tape). Installation at
Gregory Lind Gallery.

XLR8R: What artist's work was a revelation to you when you first discovered it?

Chris Duncan: I feel completely inspired and awestruck by Robert Irwin and Daniel Higgs. They both embody the growth, fearlessness, and maturation that I strive to have. Robert Irwin was an action painter who completely walked away from his studio practice to pursue installation art, which focused on color, light, and space. That was the early '70s. He threw caution to the wind and never looked back.

When I was 17 I walked into a record store in Maryland called Vinyl Ink and

was immediately drawn to a stack of LPs by a band called Lungfish. The record was called *Necklace of Heads* and it had this really simple, beautiful black-and-white picture of a man on it. He looked like he was in a trance. He was reaching out. That record came home with me and blew my mind. I had never heard anything like it. The man on the cover was Daniel Higgs, the singer. That was 1991. Over the years I have seen his art shows; I've watched him read poetry, play music, play the Jew's harp, and just be. It's 2008 and his music and art have taken such strange and honest turns. He is a man

who is connected to everything around him—he has honed in on all of it. I find his creations and way of living to be beautiful.

Then there's the Dada movement. All of it. All of them. They shook it up, and have left shock waves that will last forever. That's amazing.

What are some installation ideas that you've discarded along the way to arrive at where you're at now?

As my work was changing from things that had figurative elements in them to abstraction, I had a lot of ideas in regards to combining the two things. I made sewn

paper houses and thought it would be rad to make a whole city. Mostly, I was afraid to let go and needed a push. That came in the form of Brion Nuda Rosch and the Mimi Barr Gallery. Brion put me in a group show there and basically let me go nuts. I did, without any birds, all string, and pink tape. It felt right and I am still building off that installation: investigating string, light, shadow, optical trip-outs. It's fun.

What is the most common media you work in?

I tend to work on paper or wood panel. Working on paper allows me to expand

on some ideas by offering up the ability to sew. I use watercolor, markers, graphite... a lot different things. All my surfaces have a coat of wood putty on them. The wood putty has a fresco feel and can be sanded down to be perfectly smooth. It's a great surface to work on.

Then there's string. The string installations came from my boredom with my sewing machine. I really enjoyed the use of thread, but wanted to expand and interact with spaces, rather than paper. Conceptually it made the most sense as well. I was making relatively permanent work about transience and ephemerality.

It started to make me feel weird. So I called bullshit on myself and started investigating actual temporary work that was about that moment. It's there and then it's gone. Like all of us. Like everything.

What is one thing you would like to make but can't because of monetary limitations?

I have an interest in threes. I have an interest in simplification and reduction and contemplation. That being said, I enjoy the three most common shapes that can be found in almost everything: the square (or cube), the triangle (or

ABOVE:
untitled, 2006
(paper, paint, thread, marker, ink,
graphite).





LEFT TO RIGHT:
Hot and Cold issue 9 cover
by Ian Lynam, 2003.

Look Into My Eyes, 2007
(photo and paper collage).
Photo courtesy of
day19.com.

tetrahedron), and the circle (or sphere). I would like to create a cube that you can walk into that has a smaller cube in it. The doorway to the cube would be the same size as the smaller cube. That room would be totally white. There would be a doorway in the shape of a circle leading to another room. That room would have a neon-pink-taped floor and a large sphere (referencing the earth) hanging in the center of the room. The last doorway would be a triangle. That room would be pitch black with a white

string pyramid in it. The base of the pyramid would have a mirror on it, and [would be] lit so that there would be triangles reflected throughout the room. The sphere and the cube would have dots all over them. Form, energy, matter; mind, spirit, body; the beginning, the middle, the end; birth, life, death. Process. Three. This would be giant and [would] cost a lot of money.

Can you talk about your use of color?
I generally work off of primary colors. I

mix them into other weird colors when it becomes necessary. When I make the dot paintings, I feel that it is important to have as many colors as possible or, at the very least, to have a lot of colors touching a lot of other colors to create strange color relationships. The clustered dots are forms or bursts of energy. I don't know that I choose a color palette as much as it chooses me. I am very influenced by Josef Albers and his color experiments. I just put out the vinyl version of the Pale Hoarse record on

my new label called The Time Between the Beginning and the End. The concept for the covers is inspired by Albers. I made 104 of them. They are silk-screened and sewn and hand-numbered. The drawing is the same and the ink used is the same, but there are five different paper colors. The ink reacted differently to each paper; for example, the pink ink on yellow paper made the ink look orange, but the pink ink on blue paper made it look purple.

There is quite a lot of geometry in your work: triangles, shapes formed by strings and lines... What is your relationship to geometry?

I went to the Louvre when I was 23 and it blew my mind, in particular the Egyptian sarcophagi. Some of them had these really rudimentary color wheels on them that represented the cyclical nature of life. I took to that and started making color wheels. (Funny how at school I hated those assignments.) Anyhow, the geometry built from there. It

turned into fractals, points of contact and connection, studies of form, etcetera... so definitely more mystic, though I believe there is a connection between mysticism and mathematics, and I also believe humans have an innate geometric sensibility. I am horrible at math, by the way.

What is the best lesson you learned from punk rock?

Don't talk shit. Though I can't say I've learned that completely.

ABOVE:
Creation Song, 2006
(wood, string, paint).
Nakaochiai Gallery,
Tokyo, Japan. Photo courtesy
of Ashley Rawlings.

TBC:
Southern Comforts

Words Ken Taylor
 Photo Andy Eisberg

As South by Southwest hits legal age, we look at its history and its future challenges.



FUNERAL DINER AT SXSW 2006

As Creative Director for South by Southwest, Brent Grulke has seen a lot of change come to the Austin, Texas music festival since it started in 1987. He's been there from the beginning, working as a stage manager in that inaugural year, and has witnessed the event grow from a homegrown street party to the country's largest music festival of its kind; SXSW now spreads across two weeks each March, and includes film and interactive-arts portions. But bigger doesn't always mean better—with SXSW's growth has come new concerns, which we discussed with Grulke before this year's installment.

sxsw.com

XLR8R: Aside from its growth, what has been the most interesting change that you've seen with SXSW over the years? Brent Grulke: The greater diversity of people and music that are now [there]. We have artists from all over the world creating almost every style of music you can name. That wasn't the case in the early years, and I definitely find that a

change for the better.

How have after-parties and non-SXSW-sanctioned events affected SXSW?

Sometimes in good ways, sometimes not so good. Some people work to complement SXSW and others work to exploit it. Fortunately, most people see that supporting what we do is best for everyone's long-term interests, and we're able to find ways to work together. Too many events have eventually been taken down by their "fringe" events, and no one benefits when that happens, because those competing events go away when the host event dies.

What does it take for a festival like SXSW to go carbon-neutral?

Becoming aware of how an event uses energy and other precious resources and how to minimize that use are the first steps. It's a jigsaw puzzle, with every one person's use connected to another's. We're all interconnected, so it's vital that each individual address what he or she can do to reduce their carbon footprint...

SXSW studies what the best thinking currently is regarding the environment, and seeks to adopt more responsible behavior as a result of that knowledge. It can be expensive and time consuming to become more "green," but the cost of not doing so is frightening. I hate to even address this issue much, as it's easy to use the environment as a P.R. stunt these days, and easy to "greenwash" your environmental impact without doing the hard work of conservation and individual sacrifice. Suffice to say, I need to get my own house in greater order before I crow about what a good job SXSW is doing.


With SXSW's growing importance and popularity, many unsigned musicians grumble that they can't get booked anymore.

The best I can do is say this: It's not true. The number of acts performing at SXSW has steadily climbed, and the percentage of acts without any deal, or with an indie deal, has remained more or less constant since day one. That means that more unsigned and indie acts perform at

SXSW every year. Every year about 10% of the acts have major-label deals, about 40% have indie deals, and fully half have no label deal, or release their music on their own.

Electronic music seems to have more of a presence at SXSW these days. Is that by design?

It is. I have always wanted more electronic music at SXSW, but for a variety of reasons—not least of which, the inability to secure appropriate venues—it's taken some time to make it work at SXSW. Luckily we can [include more electronic music] now, and more and more people are producing electronic music, or incorporating electronics into other forms of music, so I look forward to SXSW featuring lots more of it, whatever forms it takes, in the future.

 To read the full transcript of this interview, visit XLR8R.com/116extras.



XLR8R SPONSORS EIGHT BUCK-WILD EVENTS AT SXSW

PAPER BAG & UPPER CLASS GET SAUCED SHOWCASE
 Wednesday, March 12, 8PM

Laura Barrett, The Cansecos, Woodhands, The Russian Futurists, The Acorn, Cadence Weapon

Habana Patio
 709 E. 6th St.
www.paperbagrecords.com
www.upperclass.to

BURLESQUE MINNESOTA MIGRATION SHOWCASE
 Friday, March 14, 12 PM

The Plastic Constellations, Birthday Suits, STNNG!, His Mischief, Vampire Hands, Private Dancer

The Dog & Duck Pub
 406 W. 17th St.
www.modern-radio.com

SMALLTOWN SUPERSOUND SHOWCASE
 Wednesday, March 12, 8 PM

Lindstram, Sunburned Hand of the Man, Kim Hiorthey, Arp, Bjern Torske, Diskjokke

Thirsty Nickel
 325 E. 6th St.
www.smalltownsupersound.com

ASTHMATIC KITTY SHOWCASE
 Friday, March 14, 2 PM

Marla Hansen, Hi Red Center, Gary Higgins, The Weird Weeds

Okay Mountain Gallery
 1312 E. Cesar Chavez St.
www.asthmatickitty.com

THE SOCIAL REGISTRY SHOWCASE
 Thursday, March 13, 6 PM

Blood on the Wall, Sian Alice Group, Psychic Ills, Samara Lubelski, Mike Bones, Douglas Armour

Room 710
 710 Red River St.
www.thesocialregistry.com

ASTHMATIC KITTY SHOWCASE
 Saturday, March 15, 2 PM

Grampall Jockabox, Smoke Detector, Son Lux, Cryptacize, Sunset

Okay Mountain Gallery
 1312 E. Cesar Chavez St.
www.asthmatickitty.com

BURLESQUE DO IT TO IT SHOWCASE
 Thursday March 13, 9 PM

DJs Cosmo Baker, Dave Nada, Smalltown DJs, Bird Peterson, DJ Mel, Prince Klassen, Mike the 2600 King

Silhouette
 718 Congress Ave.
www.burlesquedesign.com/doit-toit

COCK ROCK DISCO, DEATHBOMB ARC, LOAD RECORDS 3-WAY SHOWCASE
 Saturday, March 15, 8 PM

Justice Yeldham and the Dynamic Ribbon Device, Shit and Shine, DJ Scotch Egg, Sightings, Clockcleaner, White Mice, Anavan, Friends Forever, Nero's Day at Disneyland, Kevin Shields, DeviNull, Foot Village, Captain Ahab, Jason Forrest

Scout Inn 1308 E. 4th St.
www.cockrockdisco.com, www.deathbombarc.com
www.loadrecords.com



TM

CONVERSE®

converse.com

